

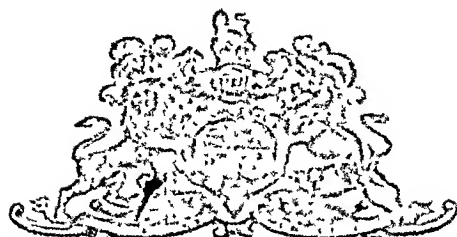


Indian Famine Commission, 1901.

APPENDIX, VOL. III.

# EVIDENCE OF WITNESSES.

CENTRAL PROVINCES.



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INTRODUCTORY.

1. What was the outlook in your district when the rains of 1899 commenced? What had been the character of the harvests in the two preceding years?
2. Were the *khariif* sowings up to normal? If not, what percentage of the normal cultivated area was sown? Please state briefly how the normal cultivated area was arrived at.
3. (a) What is the average rainfall of your district during the rainy season? (b) What was the actual rainfall in the rainy season of 1899 and what percentage of the average did it represent? (c) When did the rains cease? and (d) What was the distribution of the rainfall from June to September (both inclusive) compared with the average?
4. What percentage of a normal harvest on a normal cultivated area did the actual *khariif* harvest of 1899 represent?
5. What percentage of the total population of your district depends exclusively on agriculture—
  - (a) as petty cultivators?
  - (b) as labourers?

PRELIMINARY ACTION.

6. Was the necessity of relief assumed from the fact of crop failure or was proof of necessity required by compliance with tests?
7. What were the observed facts which led you to think that the machinery of relief should be set in motion?
8. What particular relief measures did you first undertake? and what tests were applied to gauge the extent of the distress?
9. How were you prepared to meet famine?—(a) Were lists of relief works ready, had the works on that list been actually located, and had surveys and estimates of cost been made out beforehand? (b) Did the relief programme include scales of establishment necessary to meet any emergency? and were lists of candidates qualified for famine service kept up?
10. Did the relief programme contemplate large public works or small village works as the backbone of the relief system? If the former, was a programme of village works ready in reserve from the beginning?
11. In the sequence of relief measures, what place was taken by the following :—
  - (a) Test works,
  - (b) Poor-houses,
  - (c) Kitchens { (i) on works,  
(ii) elsewhere,
  - (d) organisation of private charity, especially in towns.
  - (e) opening the Government forests.
12. What system of local inspection and control was instituted and at what period—
  - (a) to arrange for village relief,
  - (b) to stimulate the local employment of labour,
  - (c) to organise local charity,
  - (d) to observe the general condition of the people?
13. Were loans issued at the outset? If so, to what extent, under what Act, under what conditions, to what classes and for what objects? Were they recoverable in whole or in part?
14. Can irrigation wells be made in your district or any portion of it? What was the average depth below the surface of water on the cessation of the rains in 1899? Was the digging of wells encouraged by loans, and if so, were they successful—
  - (a) in securing the crop on the ground,
  - (b) as a permanent improvement,
  - (c) as a temporary measure to employ labour?
15. If labour was the first criterion of the need for relief, what works were first undertaken? Were they ordinary works under district or local boards? and under whose supervision were they conducted?
16. What tasks were exacted on test works, and was the same task taken from every one irrespective of sex and previous occupation?

17. Was payment in strict proportion to results? Was there a maximum wage, a minimum wage, a rest-day allowance or an allowance to dependants?

18. What circumstances induced the conversion of test works into regular relief works?

### LARGE PUBLIC WORKS.

19. When it had been decided to open regular relief works, what works were first opened? large public works or small village works?

20. Under whose control were these works? Had the scale of supervising establishment been prescribed in advance, and was that establishment ready? Was there any delay in opening the works? were tools and plant available?

21. Were the works divided into charges, and, if so, for what maximum number of workers did the charge provide? Was that maximum ever exceeded? and if so, what steps were taken to relieve the pressure?

22. Had each charge its own establishment? If so, please give that establishment in detail. What, if any, arrangements had been prescribed beforehand for hutting or sheltering the people; for conservancy or sanitation; for water-supply; for food supply; and for medical conveniences and supervision?

23. Was admission to the works free to all persons ready to submit to the labour test, or was any system of selection (*e.g.*, by tickets) tried at the commencement? Was a distance test of any kind insisted on and was residence on the works compulsory?

24. On the facts that came to your notice, what is your opinion as to the area or population which a large public work, capable of entertaining two charges of 5,000 persons each, may be expected to serve? What distance from their homes did applicants for relief go?

25. Were officers of the Department of Public Works subordinate to the Civil authorities in all matters? If not, please specify the matters in which they were independent.

26. Was there a Civil officer for each charge; from what class was he taken; what salary did he receive; and what was his position with reference to the local representatives of the Public Works Department?

Had the Civil officer in charge full authority to assure himself that measurements were correctly and punctually made, and that the orders of Government were being followed in all the matters mentioned at the end of paragraph 426 of the report of the Famine Commission of 1898?

27. If local conditions were met with, which affected the application of the prescribed tasks, did it rest with the Civil officer in charge to decide which of the prescribed tasks was applicable? (*e.g.* in varying strata of hard and soft earth).

28. How were the gangs of labourers constituted, and what was the size of the gangs? Were arrangements made to secure village or family gangs, so far as possible, and with what success?

29. What classification of labourers, and what wage scale was adopted, and how does it compare with the classification and wage scale of paragraph 445 of the report of the Famine Commission of 1898? How far did experience justify departure from the latter—

(a) from the administrative point of view?

(b) from the point of view of economy?

30. Did your experience lead you to consider that any, and if so what, distinction should be drawn in the classification and wages of men and women?

Did the absence of such distinction lead to any difficulty?

Please consider this question also in its financial aspect.

31. Was the Code task system introduced from the outset, or was some system of payment by results first adopted? Were the two systems carried on simultaneously or not—

(a) in the same district or sub-division of a district?

(b) on the same work?

32. Did your experience lead you to agree with the Famine Commission of 1898 that a system of payment by results was unsuited to conditions of acute distress or actual famine? or do you consider that, if started in time, relief can be adequately afforded in cases of severe famine by works conducted throughout on a system of payment by results?

33. What task was exacted at the outset; was it graduated to the class of workers or was the full task demanded from all; was any allowance made for the distance the workers had come? Were subsequent changes of the task in the direction of greater leniency or greater severity; what were the circumstances which led up to the changes, and with reference to what classes of persons were they introduced?

34. Did your experience lead you to believe that the scale of wages adopted was adequate, inadequate, or unduly liberal? What in your experience was its effect upon the condition of the workers? Was there any evidence that the workers saved upon their earnings? Did copper coin return freely to the banias on the works? Please give reasons for your opinion.

35. Was a rest day wage given, or could the workers earn more than the full wage in order to support themselves on the rest day? Which method does your experience lead you to prefer?

36. Does your experience lead you to consider that the minimum wage is too high, and that fining for short work should be continued down to the penal wage or to something between the penal and minimum wage?

37. Was the minimum wage allowed at the outset; if not, was there a penal wage, and was there a tendency to fine down to it? Did the penal wage anywhere become the wage generally earned? If it did, to what do you attribute the fact, and what were its effects?

38. How often was payment made; daily or weekly or at what other interval? If weekly, did your experience lead you to think more frequent payment desirable and practicable?

39. When people first came on a relief work were they paid daily or at longer intervals? Did you find that payment otherwise than daily threw the workers seriously into the debt of the Bunia?

40. To whom was payment made? to the individual or to the head of the gang? Which method did your experience lead you to prefer?

41. Can you give, for two or three typical relief works, figures showing, at the time of greatest pressure, the number of relief workers earning—

(a) the full wage,

(b) the penal wage,

(c) a wage between the full and penal wage.

Did people remain long on the works on the penal wage?

42. If a system of payment by results was in force, was it one of the systems described in paragraphs 208 to 212 of the report of the Famine Commission of 1898, or in what respects did it differ from them?

43. What was the maximum wage, and what arrangements were made for the relief of children; or for the relief of weakly persons capable of some work? Did the arrangements for the latter take the form of task work with a minimum wage, or piece work at favourable rates, and which in your experience is preferable?

44. Were Contractors employed at any stage of the famine?

45. Under the payment by results system were muster rolls kept up, or what arrangement was there by which on emergency the code task system could be promptly introduced?

46. Under whose orders was the prices scale for the calculation of the wages fixed? On what grains was it based? Were small variations in prices neglected?

47. Please trace distinctly the various steps adopted in opening a relief work, admitting and classifying labourers, providing for dependants, providing tools and plant, marking out work and measuring it up, paying wages, imposing fines, conserving the water supply, and arranging for hospital requirements.

48. Under whose orders were tasks and wages stiffened or relaxed, (i.e., the Collector, the Commissioner, the Famine Commissioner or the Local Government?) Had the Collector or the Commissioner power to issue orders independently or had he to refer to higher authority. If he acted in anticipation of sanction was he often over-ruled.

51. Were arrangements made at any time to draft people from large public to small village works; what was the occasion calling for transfer; and with what success was the transfer achieved?

#### SMALL VILLAGE WORKS

52. What part did the small village works play in the scheme of relief?

53. What classes of works did they include?

54. Were they conducted

(a) under the supervision of the Public Works Department,

(b) under the supervision of the Civil Agency,

(i) by direct management,

(ii) through landholders or by means of other non-official agency?

55. If conducted under (b) (ii) of the last question, what arrangements were made

(a) for laying down the work,

(b) for measuring it up,

(c) for paying wages?

How far were the landholders and others responsible administratively and financially; and under whose supervision was the work done?

56. Was any attempt made to work the Code task system? What scale of wages was adopted? Was employment given to every one who wanted it, or only to special classes?

57. Was any system of selection of applicants for relief tried? If so, was it successful or not?

58. If large public and small village works existed close to one another, did either draw labourers from the other?

59. Did your experience lead you to form any definite opinions as to the desirability or otherwise of extending small village relief works? If so, please state them.

#### SPECIAL RELIEF.

60. Are there many aboriginal tribes in your district? Were special tests applied to them? Were they forward to take relief or had relief to be taken near their homes? How far were the measures taken successful?

61. Were forest and fodder works opened? How were these controlled and what classes did they serve?

62. Were able-bodied persons engaged at any time on works of private utility at public expense (*e.g.*, weeding fields, etc.)? and, if so, to what extent, at what stage, for how long and under what control?

63. Were special measures taken to relieve artisans (weavers and others) in their own crafts?

64. Did they show a reluctance to go on ordinary relief works; or were they physically unfit for ordinary labour?

65. If special relief measures for artisans were taken, were they successful from the point of view of (a), relief (b) economy; and does your experience lead you to consider that more might have been done in this respect, under direct official control or with official assistance?

66. What measures were taken to prevent mortality of cattle and with what success?

67. Were any operations undertaken for the supply of compressed grass to tracts suffering from scarcity of fodder?

#### GRATUITOUS RELIEF.

68. How were dependants relieved—

(a) on large public works,

(b) on small village works,

in cash or uncooked grain or with cooked food?

69. Statistics have been called for, but which of the recognized forms of gratuitous relief was most employed in your district, and on what grounds was it chosen?

70. Did the distribution of village relief in your district go beyond the classes mentioned in paragraph 141 of the report of the Famine Commission of 1880? If so, were the recipients of gratuitous relief selected by persons with local knowledge or were they admitted to relief because they complied with some test such as eating cooked food? Please enumerate the tests, if any, by which admission to gratuitous relief was restricted.

71. How many poor houses were open in your district, and when were they opened. What classes of people most frequented them; and were the numbers ever large?

72. Were poor houses used as depôts for vagrants and immigrants; and were persons who refused to work on relief works sent to poor houses as a punishment?

73. Were measures taken periodically to weed out the poor houses and send people to their homes or to relief works?

74. Statistics have been called for, but how many kitchens were opened in your district, (a) before and (b) after the rains broke? What radius was a kitchen expected to serve?

75. What ration was provided and how often were meals distributed, and at fixed or varying times? Were people compelled to feed on the premises or were they allowed to take food away?

76. Was any limit of distance from relief works fixed, within which civil kitchens could not be opened? or were they open for a larger radius?

77. Was admission to kitchens free or restricted; and if restricted, what was the method of selection for admission?

78. What was the poor house ration and of what grain; was it varied on occasion to meet the case of sickness or weakness?

79. Who drew up the village gratuitous relief lists, by whom were they checked; how often and by whom were the recipients inspected?

80. How was payment made, (a) in cash or grain, (b) daily, weekly, monthly or for any other period, (c) at the homes of the recipients or elsewhere?

81. To what persons except those mentioned in the Code was gratuitous village relief given; for how long and under what necessity?

82. What castes of cooks were employed? Was any reluctance to take cooked food shown by any classes and at any stage; and if so by what classes and at what stage?

83. What persons were in charge of kitchens; what supervision and check was exercised over them?

84. Were cheap grain shops opened; if so for what classes and how was admission to their benefit regulated? Was this form of relief successful and what did it cost?

85. Did cheap grain shops in any way discourage the importation of grain; or did they affect general prices?

## SUSPENSIONS AND REMISSIONS OF LAND REVENUE.

82. To what extent was land revenue in your district (a) suspended, (b) remitted?

83. Upon what system were such remissions or suspensions based? Were they based upon crop failure solely, or was the general capacity of the individual to pay also taken into account; and in the latter case, how, and by whom and upon whose information was that general capacity determined?

84. At what stage were suspensions and remissions determined; after or before collection of revenue began?

85. In zemindari tracts did suspensions or remissions of rent follow automatically upon suspensions and remissions of revenue? If only part of the revenue of a village (or estate) was suspended, who decided what cultivators should receive remissions or suspensions?

86. Did you observe any facts tending to show that sufficient relief by suspension or remission of revenue had not been given, or that such relief had been abused or had failed to reach the right persons?

## GENERAL.

87. If the number of persons in receipt of relief in your district at any time exceeded 15 per cent. of the population affected, please state briefly the reason for it.

88. Does your experience lead you to consider that relief was at any particular period excessive or defective, and what are the grounds of your opinion?

89. To what classes generally did the people in receipt of relief belong; did they include proprietors, State ryots, occupancy tenants, and other tenants with security of tenure, and, if so, to what extent?

90. In your experience were people more ready to come on relief than in former famines, and, if so, to what is this readiness attributable?

91. Did facts come to your notice indicating a contraction of private credit, or a reluctance of the people to exhaust their own resources before accepting State relief?

92. Do you consider that the tests of the Code are sufficient to prevent persons not in need of relief from seeking it?

93. If you consider the tests of the Code are insufficient, what further tests would you propose? Or do you consider any method of selection for admission to relief to be practicable?

94. What system of registration of births and deaths is followed?

95. Where statistics show a very high mortality, how far is that attributable to diseases connected with unsuitable or insufficient food?

96. How far was an impure or insufficient water-supply a cause of increased mortality, and what measures were taken to improve or extend the water-supply? Was permanganate of potash used to disinfect wells and other sources of water-supply, and, if so, at what intervals of time?

97. What special sanitary arrangements were made—

- (a) on works;
- (b) at poor-houses;
- (c) at kitchens;

and were they sufficient? Who supervised them?

98. Was there a regular inspection of the grain shops on the works, and did that inspection disclose the sale of inferior or unwholesome grain?

99. How far did the people supplement their food with wild products, and had the consumption of wild products any appreciable effect upon their health?

100. Did you observe much immigration from Native States? Roughly what proportion did such immigrants bear to the total number of the population?

101. What was the mortality among these immigrants compared with the mortality of the district; and what was the effect of this mortality upon the death-rate of the district?

102. How were the orphans disposed of at the end of the famine? Were they made over to friends, caste people, native institutions or missionaries?

103. Have you any suggestions to make regarding the classification of the objects of the Charitable Relief Fund in paragraph 527 of the report of the Famine Commission of 1898? Can you suggest any improvements in the management of the fund?

104. Did you hear any complaints regarding the inability of the Railways to keep pace with the grain and fodder traffic to the distressed districts? If so, please specify the nature of the complaints. Was the local price of food raised by any defects in railway carriage?

104(a). What arrangements were in force to keep you informed of the traffic in food grains, by rail, river and road? Were the statistics reliable? What proportion of the assumed consumption of the people was imported?

105. Did you hear any complaints from employers of private labour, agricultural or other, that owing to the attractions of relief works they experienced difficulty in obtaining labourers?

106. Has there been any change in the character of the crops sown of late years? Has that change taken the form of—

- (a) an increase of double cropping;
- (b) the substitution of food crops for more valuable crops or *vice versa*?



107. Does the practice of paying wages in grain still prevail in your district? Is the tendency to substitute a cash for a grain wage? Have cash wages risen in sympathy with the rise in prices?

108. To what extent have the provisions of the Famine Code been departed from? Please specify the departures. Were they justified in your experience?

109. Were Staff Corps officers employed in supervision? And were officers of the Native Army and non-commissioned officers of the British Army employed in minor posts? Can you suggest any other source from which supervising officers can be drawn?

110. How far was non-official agency made use of during the famine? Was it successful? And is there scope for its extension?

111. Please trace with great care the effect upon

- (1) the number of people seeking relief,
- (2) the death-rate,

of any changes in—

- (a) the system of work (*e.g.*, a change from Code task to payment-by-results system),
- (b) the task,
- (c) the scale of wages,
- (d) the mode of calculating fines,
- (e) the tests of necessity (such as the insistence on a distance test, or compulsory residence, or the drafting to distant works),

and did these changes lead to disorganisation or wandering?

112. Has your experience shown that the massing of people on large works tends to disorganise family life, or to weaken social restraints, or to relax moral ties? If so, can you suggest any means connected with the class or organisation of relief works whereby these evils may be removed or mitigated?

7

MR. R. G. PANTIN, I.C.S., DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, BHANDARA.

President.—When did you join the district?

A.—At the end of 1898.

Q.—You were there the whole of 1898 and 1899 in charge of the district?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Have you had any previous experience of Bhandara?

A.—No.

Q.—What parts of the provinces have you served in before?

A.—In the Nagpur District, in the Narsingpur District.

Q.—What is the proportion of *kharif* to *rabi* cultivation in Bhandara?

A.—*Kharif* preponderates in the proportion of seven *kharif* to three *rabi*.

Q.—Is there much double-cropping in the district?

A.—Yes; there is a good deal of double-cropping, but I should not like to say how much without figures.

Q.—What is your principal *kharif* crop?

A.—Rice.

Q.—When were you first apprehensive that there would be a crop failure?

A.—At the end of July.

Q.—Before the orders of the Chief Commissioner reached you?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What action did you take with a view to ascertaining the extent of the crop failure?

A.—I ordered the *patwāris* to report the estimated outturn.

Q.—You did not have a regular statement prepared?

A.—No.

Q.—Had you a regular statement made later on, in the usual way?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What is the result of the actual *partial* which you had made in October? Did the ten per cent. which you give in your written replies, represent your first or your final estimate?

A.—My final estimate.

Q.—Did you report the failure as ten per cent. before you took action?

A.—No; I cannot say I did.

Q.—How did prices stand in August, when you took action?

A.—They were not very high in August. I think that rice did not reach 12 seers till the beginning of September.

Q.—Is rice the principal food of the people?

A.—Yes.

Q.—They do not live upon *juar*?

A.—Not to a large extent. I think they do in certain parts, but to a small extent only.

Q.—In October had the rise in prices become very marked?

A.—Yes. By the end of September prices had risen to eight seers.

Q.—Is there much well-irrigation in the district?

A.—No.

Q.—Before the receipt of the orders of the Government of the 14th August, did you take any action? ~~Food kitchens, *mulā* for all the villages.~~

A.—No, sir.

Q.—On receipt, what did you do?

A.—I organized the Famine Supervising Staff and waited; I did not start relief at once.

Q.—Your unit was the *patwāri*: for how many villages was the *patwāri* responsible?

A.—There was one *patwāri* for 8 or 12 villages.

Q.—And over the *patwāri*?

A.—The Circle Officer.

Q.—Over how many *patwāris* had the Circle Officer charge?

A.—I should say about 12 or 15.

Q.—And over the Circle Officer you had whom?

A.—The Charge Officer.

Q.—How many Charge Officers had you in the district?

A.—Nine Charge Officers.

Q.—The *patwāris* were responsible for the administration of gratuitous relief in the village?

A.—Yes, with the Circle Officer.

Q.—Under the *patwāri* was there anybody?

A.—Nobody between ~~the~~ and the *mukuddam*.

Q.—Had the *mukuddam* any responsibilities?

A.—Yes, he was responsible for certain matters, such as the lists of village paupers.

Q.—When did you begin to prepare your lists of village paupers?

A.—After the order of the 14th of August.

Q.—By what time were they prepared?

A.—By the end of August.

Q.—What shape did your first expenditure of public money on relief take?

A.—Village relief, cash relief.

Q.—To whom was this cash relief distributed?

A.—To those who were unable to work, and who had no one able and willing to support them.

Q.—Were these the persons whose names had been made out by the *mukuddam*?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You did not commence your relief with test-works?

A.—No.

Q.—When did the ordinary public works commence?

A.—On the 15th October.

Q.—So that from the end of August until the 15th October, this distribution of charitable relief was going on?

A.—Not throughout the district. The lists were prepared by the end of August, the relief began in various parts throughout September.

Q.—From the beginning of September till the end of October?

A.—Roughly.

Q.—In the orders that were issued it was stated that under certain circumstances gratuitous relief was to be given to able-bodied persons. Was such relief distributed before the opening of relief works in October?

A.—No.

Q.—Was September entirely a rainless month?

A.—I think there were two showers. It was not entirely rainless.

Q.—When you began your public works, were they large public works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How many did you start with?

A.—Four.

Q.—Had you before hand marked out what number of large relief works you required in your district?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Your district is divided into how many tahsils?

A.—Three tahsils.

Q.—Did you have relief works in each tahsil?

A.—No, we did not go by the tahsil. We divided the district according to the road work available.

Q.—You began with four relief works. Did you begin all four simultaneously?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What tract of country did those four works serve? Were they pretty fairly distributed throughout the district?

A.—There were two in the north and two in the south.

Q.—When you commenced your public works had you considered the possibility of having village works; or did it occur to you at a later interval to prepare for village works?

A.—I forget at what period the village works were started. But it was very shortly after the public works. The idea was to let the public works serve alone for about a radius of 15 miles and to have village works to fill up the space outside that radius.

Q.—The idea of organization of village works came subsequently?

A.—There was a ~~carder~~ in August.

Q.—You began your ~~carder~~ for to the people who ~~on the lists~~. In what shape was it?

A.—It was in money doles to adults, and kitchens to the children.

Q.—What made you think it necessary beyond the fact that there was crop failure? Did you notice any stragglers; any beggars wandering about the country?

A.—No.

Q.—Did you, before commencing your distribution, establish any poorhouses?

A.—No.

Q.—The distribution of money doles would have ~~the~~ effect of preventing people from wandering?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Then the result up to that time, till October, is that you anticipated the occurrence of distress from the fact that there had been crop failure, and you then proceeded to make out your lists of people who were likely to need relief, as given in the Famine Code. You had not made out these lists until the end of August. You then proceeded to distribute gratuitous relief. You did not test the necessity for relief works by opening any works until the middle of October, when public works were generally opened?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You went on assumption; there was no distinct evidence of the existence of distress?

A.—Except grain looting and the rise in prices.

Q.—What do you mean by grain looting? How much grain looting was there?

A.—It was extensive, but it was not accompanied by serious violence.

Q.—Did you mean looting carts or looting houses?

A.—Looting carts.

Q.—Were there many cases?

A.—There was a large number in September and October and then they ceased.

Q.—Your system became more established. Did you in that primary stage give advances?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Under the two Acts? Or were they advances outside the Acts?

A.—Only under the Agricultural Loans Act.

Q.—What were they given for?

A.—For purchasing seed.

Q.—You did not give advances for the purpose of digging wells?

A.—No.

Q.—Did it occur to you that the construction of wells might be useful?

A.—No.

Q.—What was the character of the *rabt* harvest?

A.—The *rabt* harvest was not good.

Q.—Was the full area sown or a contracted area?

A.—Only 69 per cent. of the normal area I think, and the outturn was only about 18 or 20 per cent. of the normal.

Q.—Had you cold weather rains?

A.—Not till late. We had them in February I think.

Q.—Did you increase your number of public works?

A.—Yes. We increased them throughout October.

Q.—What was the size of your charges?

A.—About 5,000.

Q.—Any higher?

A.—Not then, later on there were.

Q.—Did they reach ten or twelve thousand?

A.—I think 8,000 was the limit.

Q.—When they got up to 8,000, did you open another work?

A.—A subsidiary work, under a Work Agent, was started; and in another case drafting to village works was tried.

Q.—When did you commence drafting to village works?

A.—We did some drafting in January.

Q.—You commenced your village works in January?

A.—We had some works before that.

Q.—Then you did not preserve any clear line of demarcation between the time in which public works were to be utilized and village works utilized?

A.—No.

Q.—You had both going on at the same time?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did that practice continue right through?

A.—Yes.

Q.—People who came to work brought dependants with them, I think. Were they people who were not able to work?

A.—Yes.

Q.—On what system were your works? Were they on the piece-work system or task-work?

A.—There was a species of piece-work which they call intermediate system.

Q.—Did you give the people any Sunday wage?

A.—In some camps. ~~Food-kitchens for labourers at large camps.~~

Q.—Did you give people permission to burn on week days so much more than the ordinary wage as taken on the whole period would be equivalent to the Sunday wage?

A.—No sir; we did not have that system.

Q.—Did the people do the full task and earn the full wage?

A.—Not at first. But the fining was partly due to want of organization in the carrying. This was rectified.

Q.—Did you have weakly gangs?

A.—Only a few at first. I think the number inclined to increase, but I am not sure.

Q.—On the whole did it strike you that the wages earned by the people were sufficient?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was there any sign of emaciation or was there any indication that the wages given were more than sufficient?

A.—There was no trace of emaciation, I do not think there was any indication that the wages were more than sufficient.

Q.—What grain did you regulate your scale of prices on?

A.—On rice.

Q.—That was not the cheapest grain in your district on which the common people lived?

A.—It is one most commonly used.

Q.—The labourer classes. Do they eat rice?

A.—The majority do, except in the south of the district.

Q.—Is *juár* cheaper than rice?

A.—It was generally.

Q.—Did you compel people to live upon the works, or did you allow them to return to their villages at night?

A.—They were allowed to return to their villages at night.

Q.—Had you any reason to think that by allowing them to return at night there were people coming to the works, who otherwise would not have come?

A.—I think it very likely that, if they had been forced to live in the camps, fewer would have come.

Q.—Would it be a substantially smaller number?

A.—Yes.

Q.—As much as 20 per cent.?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think that this 20 per cent. would have gone without relief if they had had to remain on relief works?

A.—No; I do not like to say as large a number as that.

Q.—Do you think that some people within a margin of 20 per cent. might have pulled through without coming to your relief works if they had been deterred from coming by the conditions of residence in the camp?

A.—I should say about 10 per cent.

Q.—But substantially with the exception of that margin you do not think that people came to your relief works, who could have done without it?

A.—That is so.

Mr. Nicholson.—The numbers on relief included very few of the cultivating classes?

A.—Yes. That is my experience.

The President.—We are justified in inferring that the circumstances of the relief administration were such as to permit some persons who could do without relief, possibly ten per cent., to have access to relief?

A.—Yes.

Q.—I notice from the figures given here that there was no great diminution in the number of the labouring people on relief at the time the *rabi* harvest was gathered. Did the gathering of the *rabi* harvest have any effect in a decrease of the pressure upon you?

A.—I should say practically none.

Q.—Your *rabi* is harvested, I suppose, in March?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The numbers on works decreased from the end of March. Do you attribute that to the *rabi*, or to what?

A.—I attribute that to the cultivators' labourers going away to their fields.

Q.—In May and June. Is there much field labouring in May and June?

A.—They were preparing the fields for sowing.

Q.—Well, that is just what I want. You think the decrease of labourers, which your figures show from March onwards, is due to an expansion of agricultural labour?

A.—I think so.

Q.—The re-establishment of the ordinary conditions of agricultural life?

A.—I think so.

Q.—Well, then to what do you attribute, Mr. Pantin, the enormous increase in gratuitous relief from June onwards.

A.—I think it is due to free admission to kitchens.

Q.—When did your policy regarding the general establishment of kitchens begin. From what date did it take effect?

A.—It was to have been ~~from the beginning of the rainy season~~ preparation was made for it, so to speak, during May.

Q.—Were kitchens established in every village?

A.—No. One kitchen was established for a radius of three miles.

Q.—Every person who went to the kitchen could get food without question?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What is your own opinion, Mr. Pantin, up to this point. Do you think that if things had been allowed to find their own level, and when the rains came on persons had been allowed to go back to their ordinary occupations they would have been absorbed and that there would have been no necessity for such a large distribution of gratuitous relief in the kitchens?

A.—I do not think the demand for agricultural labour was sufficient.

Q.—What was the quantity of land cultivated last *kharif*?

A.—I can only tell you approximately; some 85 per cent. of the normal.

Q.—Don't you think that would have been enough for the ordinary agricultural labourers?

A.—There was an enormous decrease in the transplanted rice area; it was about 200,000 acres below normal.

Q.—How many people does it take to transplant the length of rice: what length of time?

A.—I cannot say.

Q.—Did you find that many persons came to kitchens and took away food with them?

A.—I did not find them doing that to a large extent.

Q.—Did people object to come to a kitchen because of their caste or were matters so arranged that in kitchens people of one caste could eat together?

A.—Certain arrangements were made. Say, for separate cooking for two castes or three castes.

Q.—Did you have Brahmin cooks?

A.—No, very few Brahmin cooks; mostly Mahars.

Q.—Might you have choked off a lot of people from your kitchens by choosing cooks of the less high castes?

A.—I think so.

Q.—Would that have been dangerous having regard to the character of the people that required relief?

A.—I think it would have been dangerous to have only Mahar cooks.

Q.—But on the whole you are of opinion that the distribution of cooked food in these kitchens was overdone?

A.—It was overdone when the highest number was on relief.

Q.—In this distribution of village relief did you endeavour to associate with yourself the respectable men of the village?

A.—No.

Q.—If grain or cash doles had been substituted for kitchen relief, do you not think you might have effected a certain saving by associating these respectable people with you in the administration of village relief, and that they would have restricted the distribution of village relief to those persons who wanted it?

A.—No: I do not think that.

Q.—Do you say that from your experience of this famine?

A.—I speak generally; I think I could not make them responsible.

Q.—Was the experiment tried?

A.—No; not in this district.

Q.—In no case was the experiment of associating the headmen of villages or the landlords, to take upon themselves the administration of village relief, tried?

A.—No.

Q.—It was all worked through official agency?

A.—Yes.

Q.—When did your relief operations cease?

A.—They practically ceased entirely at the end of November; but there were still a few thousands in December.

Q.—Had you any poorhouses?

A.—I had no regular poorhouses.

Q.—Did your famine administration cease, by knocking off individuals or by closing the relief in whole villages at once?

A.—By knocking off individuals.

Q.—At what time did you suspend the revenue?

A.—At the beginning of June.

Q.—Did you suspend any revenue for the *kharif* of 1899? When was the revenue on the *kharif* of 1899 due?

A.—In February.

Q.—Did you collect the revenue in February 1900?

A.—Only a very small percentage.

Q.—Before February, was there any suspension?

A.—The revenue was informally suspended.

Mr. Bourdillon.—At the end of the hot weather all the big public works were closed?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And the people were sent off. Was it not possible to have carried on the works?

A.—I do not think it would have been possible, for they were all earthworks.

Q.—It has been stated that village works were not possible. Is that the experience of your own district?

A.—I think so. The earth gets clogged after a heavy fall of rain.

Q.—I do not mean when the rains had begun; but until they began?

A.—It was intended that until the rain fell they should be kept on.

Q.—You closed up all village works in expectation of the rainfall?

A.—At the end of May.

Q.—Then I see it was also assumed that there would be no work for the able-bodied, because the *malguzars* could not pay for it. Was it your experience in your district that the *malguzars* were so pressed that they could not afford to pay for labour?

A.—Yes. I do not think they could have paid for labour.

Mr. Nicholson.—I understand this year there has still been a certain amount of shortage in the area sown?

A.—Very considerable shortage.

Q.—What percentage?

A.—The entire *kharif* is only 85 per cent. of the normal, but the wheat itself is, only 53,000 out of 129,000 acres.

Q.—Then there is a shortage of crop, both *kharif* and *rabi*; can you give us the reason? Is it due to want of seed?

A.—It was due to the want of seed.

Q.—Was there any difficulty of getting seed?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was any large stock of seed imported?

A.—Fairly large.

Q.—Was *tagavi* granted for the seed in the current year?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was it granted under the ordinary *tagavi* rules or under a special adaptation of them on joint responsibility?

A.—On joint responsibility.

Q.—Were the people able in that way to get seed on easier terms than usual from the dealers; did they buy their seed jointly from the dealers or individually?

A.—They bought individually.

Q.—Would your experience suggest any extension of the system of advances in joint responsibility?

A.—Well, I hardly think so. I doubt whether the people would be held responsible when the time came.

Q. 1.—The outlook was not altogether gloomy. The cropped area, which had suffered considerably in the famine of 1896-97, was well on the way to recovery. The rice of 1897 had been excellent, and of 1898 good, while the rabi had been not worse than indifferent.

Q. 2.—No : 75 per cent of the normal cultivated area was sown. The normal cultivated area is the area of 1893-94, before the bad seasons began.

Q. 3.—(a) The average rainfall of the district during the rainy season is 52.96 inches. (b) The actual rainfall of the district during the rainy season was 21.28 inches equivalent to 42 per cent. (c) The rains ceased in October 1899. (d) The distribution of the rainfall as compared with the average is noted below :—

		Bhandara Tahsil.		Sakoli Tahsil.		Tirora Tahsil.	
		Actual.	Average.	Actual.	Average.	Actual.	Average.
June	...	4.75	6.72	5.09	5.71	6.09	4.66
July	...	3.21	15.82	2.36	17.01	4.18	18.38
August	...	9.30	18.36	10.58	18.20	9.92	16.89
September	..	4.02	12.07	6.01	10.53	4.58	13.55

Q. 4.—10 per cent.

Q. 5.—The following depend exclusively on agriculture—

(a) as petty cultivators, 37.8 per cent. of the population.

(b) as labourers, 14.9 per cent. of the population.

Q. 6.—Necessity of relief was assumed from the fact of crop failure plus deterioration of condition observed among the people. When Public Works Department camps were opened on October 15th, the test of submitting to the intermediate system was applied to all who sought relief in those works. The test of inability to work and having no one able and willing to protect one was imposed in the case of gratuitous relief.

Q. 7.—Crop failure and actual observed deterioration in condition were the facts which led me to think relief-machinery must be set in motion. To these must be added a certain rise in prices and the commencement of grain-looting throughout the district.

Q. 8.—Village relief and kitchens were the first form of relief undertaken. The tests applied after Public Works Department camps were opened was the extent to which resort was had to them. Before Public Works Department Camps were opened, the test was enquiry in villages as to need of relief by inspecting Charge and Circle Officers.

Q. 9.—(a) Lists of Public Works Department works were ready.

Q. 10.—Large public works were to be the backbone of the relief system. There was no regular programme of village works in reserve from the beginning, but tanks requiring repairs were noted in the Circle and Famine Note-books.

Q. 11.—Sequences are as follows :—

(a) Opening the Government forests.

(b) Organisation of private charity (through mukaddams).

(c) Kitchens—

1. Elsewhere.

2. On works.

(d) Organisation of private charity (in towns).

(e) Poor-houses.



There were no test-works properly so called. Private charity in villages had been evoked at the very beginning as a preliminary to village relief, which was only begun when private charity failed. Subscriptions in towns to charitable objects were not elicited till November.

Q. 12.—In September 1899, the nine Revenue Inspectors' Circles of which the district is composed were split up into 22, and Inspectors or Circle Officers placed in charge. Over these were Charge Officers of the Tahsildar type of official, at first six, and afterwards nine, for the district, and over these Extra-Assistant Commissioners. They had inspection and control for the four objects specified.

Q. 13.—Yes. Rupees 32,262 were advanced under the Agriculturists' Loans Act for sowing kultha, wheat, linseed, gram and ringni, &c., in the months of September and October 1899. They were chiefly advanced to poor cultivators, repayable in whole in one instalment, with the usual rate of interest, *viz.*, Rs. 6-4-0 per annum.

Q. 14.—Irrigation wells are made, and therefore I presume can be made to a small extent only, their place being taken by tanks.

Q. 15.—Labour was not the first criterion of the need for relief. Public Works Department works were the first started.

Q. 16.—  
Q. 17.—  
Q. 18.—

} No test-works.

Q. 19.—Public works under the Public Works Department were opened first, not small village works.

Q. 20.—The direct control of these works was in the hands of the Executive Engineer, the Deputy Commissioner having general control only.

I therefore leave the majority of this group of questions to the Executive Engineer to answer.

Q. 21.—The work and the charge were synonymous. A maximum of 5,000 was fixed beforehand for the charge, but it was found in practice possible to work with larger numbers (up to 8,000); when numbers reached inconvenient limits, drafting was done to village works or to another charge, or subsidiary works were started.

Q. 22.—  
Q. 23.—

} See No. 20 above.

Q. 24.—I have known ~~some cases~~ especially in the cold weather, to a relief-camp, but the vast majority, I should say almost all, the hot weather and rains, were from neighbouring villages, say not more than 6 miles ~~from~~ from the head-quarters of the work, but from where work was going on. I should put 15 miles radius as the limit which a large public work may be expected to serve, on the ground that you can't expect people to come from a greater distance.

Q. 25.—The Deputy Commissioner had general control in all matters affecting the efficiency of relief. The Public Works Department were independent as regards professional matters.

Q. 26.—There was a Civil Officer for each charge taken from the Naib-Tahsildar class, receiving pay Rs. 100—150. The local representative of the Public Works Department or work agent was subordinate to him.

The Civil Officer-in-charge had full authority to assure himself that the orders of Government were being complied with as regards matters specified at the end of paragraph 426 of the Famine Commission Report of 1898.

Q. 27 and 28.—Please see remarks 20 above.

Q. 29.—Classification of labourers and wage scale first adopted was that recommended in paragraphs 445 and 456 of the Famine Commission Report of 1898. In January 1900

(Secretariat Circular No. F-41, dated the 22nd January 1900), some departures were made, chiefly:—

- (a) Diggers were given a 19 chittak wage instead of 20 chittaks.
- (b) Limit of age of adults was raised from 12 to 14 years.
- (c) All women to be classed as carriers.

Changes were in my opinion justified from administrative and economical point of view.

Q. 30.—In my experience the classification of women with the less robust species of male and payment accordingly which was adopted was satisfactory. Women with children at the breast under one year should be classified apart alike from men and other women, and given light work.

Q. 31.—Payment by results by the intermediate system was observed in this district throughout the famine.

Q. 32.—I consider that relief can be adequately afforded when distress is acute by such a system, if started in time.

Q. 33.—See No. 20 above.

Alterations in task depended on the amount of fining and the condition of workers on each work. Similarly, the task itself varied in earthwork with class of soil and length of lead, and in metal-breaking with the hardness of the metal. The task was graduated to the class of workers. No allowance was made for distance workers had to come.

Q. 34.—The wage scale originally prescribed was, I think, as it stood, unduly liberal. I say this because it was afterwards in January reduced with no deteriorating effect on the workers. Some of the workers saved upon their earnings in cases where a complete family of five workers were all on the work together. Such a family might earn up to Rs. 12 a month, upon which they must have saved. I also found cases of men on the works saving and sending pice to their aged relatives in the village. When, however, a scale cheaper than the actual price current was adopted, and the wages of diggers was reduced from 20 to 19 chittaks, I doubt whether the scale was unduly liberal, if the case of single individuals as well as of families working together is considered.

Q. 35.—The giving of the rest-day wage should depend upon the general condition of the workers, and this was the criterion adopted.

Q. 36.— }  
Q. 37.— } The minimum wage was never enforced.

Q. 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44 and 45.—Please see No. 20.

Q. 46.—The prices scale for the calculations was fixed under the orders of the Deputy Commissioner. It was based on the cheapest grain available and in common use amongst the people in this district—rice. Very small fluctuations were neglected.

Q. 47.—Please see No. 20.

Q. 48.—The Deputy Commissioner had power to alter tasks without reference or sanction, and to alter wages without sanction, but reporting to the Commissioner for approval.

Q. 51.—Owing to the crowded state of the Public Works Department works arrangements were sometimes made to draft coolies to village works with fair success. A fair proportion reached and joined to the village work, but several stayed on the way and eventually probably drifted back to the Public Works Department camp to which they had become used.

Q. 52.—Small village works played a supplementary part in the scheme of relief.

Q. 53.—Repair of tanks and sinking kacha wells were the chief forms of village work.

Q. 54.—They were conducted under the supervision of the Civil agency through landholders. A few also as annexes to Public Works Department works by Public Works Department.

Q. 55.—Laying down of work was arranged in consultation by the Charge Officer and the malguzar. The malguzar measured it up and paid wages daily. Workers were divided into small family gangs of from 2 to 7 members. The task was fixed by the Charge Officer in consultation with the malguzar of so many *pasoris* per rupee according to the lead and lift and the quality of the soil. The *pasori* measures usually  $7\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$  cubic feet. A daily register was kept by the malguzar showing work done by and amount paid to each gang. On visiting the work every 10 days or so the Circle or Charge Officer measured the work and questioned the coolies as to receipts, comparing the results with the register. If the results were satisfactory the malguzar's advance was renewed.

The Charge and Circle Officer supervised the work.

The exact responsibility of the malguzar was never defined, and I rarely found it necessary to enforce it. They required constant supervision, but acted on the whole very fairly.

Q. 56.—No Code task system was adopted.

Wages were paid at so many *pasoris* per rupee, the number being so adjusted as to give the workers roughly one pice less than what would be obtained on a Public Works Department work, in view of the fact that the work was near the homes of the labourers.

Employment was given only to those of the surrounding villages and in need of relief on tickets obtained from the Charge or Circle Officer.

Q. 57.—Selection was made as above. It was successful. Where a village was equidistant from a Public Works Department work and a village work, there was a tendency to prefer the Public Works Department work on account of the higher pay.

Q. 58.—As far as possible it was arranged that large public and small village works did not exist near one another; where they did, tasks were arranged so that neither drew labourers from the other.

Q. 59.—In my experience it is desirable to extend small village works. The improvement in tanks, which is the result, is more remunerative than indefinite multiplication of roads. The work is congenial to the people, and above all it keeps them in their villages. It enlists the services of malguzars in the work of relief. The district is one in which the scope for tank work is extensive.

Q. 60.—There are few aboriginal tribes, and those there are, are little more shy than the average rural population. Special tests were not applied and were not necessary.

Q. 61.—Fodder works were opened. They served the adjacent population and were controlled by the Charge and Circle Officers.

Q. 62.—Able-bodied persons were employed at the public expense in transplanting and weeding fields during the rains. The numbers never exceeded 16,233, and the form of relief lasted from the middle of July till the end of September, the average on this form of relief being about 12,000. The work was controlled by Charge and Circle Officers working through the malguzar.

Q. 63.—Special measures were taken to relieve the fine weavers of Bhandara town at their own craft, 363 being the highest number so relieved at any one time.

Q. 64.—The weavers showed at first a reluctance to go on ordinary relief-works, but few of them were physically unfit for the work carried on at Public Works Department camps. Weaver relief was confined to the fine-cloth weavers only, and the majority of the remainder eventually went to the Public Works Department camps.

Q. 65.—From the point of view of relief the measures taken were successful. Seventy-two thousand three hundred and four day-units were relieved at a cost of Re. 0-1-2 per head per day. Cloth worth Rs. 113-4-0 was sold to the public, Rs. 4,437 is left in stock, which it is expected will be sold in February as soon as the marriage season commences and there is a demand for cloth. If the price is obtained, the cost of establishment and contingencies, Rs. 270, will be the only cost to Government, and the relief may be said to be economical. I do not think that more might have been done.

Q. 66.—Six thousand nine hundred and fifteen tons of ~~grain~~ were cut and stacked. There was little mortality amongst cattle, and what there was was from cattle disease, not from want of fodder or water.

Q. 67.—No.

Q. 68.—Dependants on large public works were relieved by cooked food.

Dependants on village works were relieved by cooked food at a kitchen in the village, save in the rare cases where there was no kitchen in the village, in which case they were relieved by village cash relief.

Q. 69.—Kitchens were the most employed form of gratuitous relief. They were chosen because the taking of cooked food in a kitchen was considered a better guarantee of want than the acceptance of a cash dole.

Q. 70.—Village relief did not go beyond the classes specified.

Q. 71.—There were no poor-houses proper existing during the famine, only poor-house hospitals or pauper wards attached to dispensaries.

There were four of these opened as follows:—

Gondia ...	...	...	November 1899.
Tumsar ...	...	...	February 1900.
Bhandara ...	...	...	May 1900.
Sakoli ...	...	...	September 1900.

Diseased paupers frequented them. The number were never large, rarely exceeding 12 at any one pauper ward, and never exceeding 61 at all at one time.

Q. 72.—No; no.

Q. 73.—Yes.

Q. 74.—Before the rains broke 215 kitchens were opened. After the rains broke 260.

A kitchen was expected to serve a radius of three miles. But in rains radius reduced.

Q. 75.—The ration provided was according to Mr. Fuller's scale as per margin. Meals were provided twice a day at 10 A. M. and 4 P. M. People were compelled to feed on the premises and were not allowed to take food away.

			Measures, Chittaks.	
Adults	...	...	3	9
Children 14 years to 10 years	...	...	2½	7½
" 8 " to 10 "	...	...	2	6
" 7 " to 4 "	...	...	1½	4½
" below 4 years	...	...	1	3

Q. 76.—No limit of distance was fixed within which Civil kitchens could not be opened.

Some Civil kitchens were opened close to relief-works.

Q. 77.—Admission to kitchens was free from middle June to the August. Before that it was restricted to the classes entitled to village cash relief under the Code.

Q. 74. <sup>A</sup> The ration given at the pauper ward was, if the patient was well enough, the same as that given at the kitchen, supplemented or varied according to the requirements of the disease by the Hospital Assistant.

Q. 75. <sup>A</sup> The village gratuitous relief lists were drawn up in rough by the patwari in concert with the mukaddam. Selections for actual relief were made from this list by the Circle Officer.

The lists were checked by the Charge Officer and superior Inspecting Officers.

The recipients were inspected once in 10 days by the Circle Officer, later every 15 days and 18 days in the rainy season, and as often as possible by the Charge Officer and Superior Officers.

Q. 76. <sup>A</sup> Payment was made:—

(a) ~~by~~ cash.

(b) Monthly.

(c) At the homes of the recipients.

Q. 77.—<sup>4</sup>To none.

Q. 78.—Various castes according to the prevalent caste of the village, but chiefly Marars and Kunbis.

Certain reluctance to take cooked food during the earlier stages of the famine was evinced by all castes, especially Sonars, Kalars, Koshtis and Mussalmans. Later the prejudice, for which a preference for cash doles was largely responsible, was largely broken through. But the castes above named stand out in my memory, as many members of them refused to go to kitchens till the last.

Q. 79.—During the first six months of the famine, whilst the numbers at kitchens were comparatively small, the charge of kitchens was entrusted to the police, to schoolmasters and, in some cases, to mukaddams, unassisted. Afterwards when the numbers increased the police and schoolmasters were in most cases given the assistance of a muharir, and in villages where there was no school or outpost, charge was transferred from the mukaddam to a muharir paid according to the numbers attending from Rs. 20 to 8 per mensem.

The Charge and Circle Officers supervised the kitchens, checked accounts and paid bills

Q. 80.— }  
Q. 81.— } No cheap grain shops were opened.

Q. 82.—Out of a total land revenue demand of Rs. 5,03,017, a sum of Rs. 4,32,417 was suspended.

The question of remission of all or a portion of this sum is under consideration

Q. 83.—Suspensions were proportioned to percentage by which the cropping and outturn of principal crops fell short of the normal, each village being considered separately. The general capacity of the individual to pay was not taken into account.

Q. 84.—Suspensions were determined before collections actually began,

Q. 85.—In zamindari tracts suspensions of rent followed automatically upon suspensions of revenue.

The malguzar or inferior proprietor apportioned the amount to be recovered amongst his tenants.

Q. 86.—I did not observe any facts tending to show that sufficient relief by suspension had not been given or that relief had been abused or failed to reach the right persons.

Q. 87.—~~The~~ numbers in receipt of relief in this district exceeded 15 per cent. of the population of the district roughly from the beginning of March till the end of August, but it never reached 19 per cent.

I ascribe the excess to the severity of the distress.

Q. 88.—I think relief was never defective, but perhaps very slightly excessive (a) in March when the numbers at Public Works Department camps were at their height, and (b) in July and August when kitchen numbers were at their height.

My reasons for thinking work relief at one time somewhat excessive are:—

- (1) A few substantial tenants, men with four bails or more, were met with on such works.
- (2) At some camps, though the workers were being fined severely, they did not lose in condition.
- (3) If a whole family went on relief it could and did earn up to Rs. 12 a month, which was probably more than it required. My reason for thinking kitchen relief at one time somewhat excessive, was that in some villages I found persons feeding there whose appearance led me to suppose they did not need relief.

Generally speaking, however, I do not think relief of either kind was excessive.

Q. 89.—Almost all on relief were labourers, chiefly Mahars, both the casual day-labourer and the servants of poorer tenants and malguzars. There were very few tenants and they almost entirely of the pettiest kind, persons with two bullocks and of ordinary tenure. I came across very few of higher status. But I remember a few malguzars, all of them men who owned so fractional a share in their villages as to occupy practically no higher status than a poor cultivator.

Q. 91.—I have given reasons under No. 88 to suppose that certain persons came on relief before exhausting their last farthing.

Q. 92 and 93.—I consider the tests of the Code generally sufficient. But as regards Public Works Department relief-works, I think a trial might be made of admitting strong-looking persons living within 6 miles of the part where work is going on by ticket only obtained from the Civil Charge Officers, who would only give such a ticket after ascertaining in the village that the applicant was in need of relief.

Q. 95.—High mortality is attributable to a small extent only to diseases connected with unsuitable or insufficient food.

Q. 96.—Impure and insufficient water-supply was responsible to a small extent only for the high mortality, *i. e.*, in so far as it encouraged cholera brought by infection from other places. The water-supply was in fact not so very short, everything possible having been done to encourage the sinking of kacha wells by the villagers and malguzars, and a large number of kacha wells having been sunk at Government expense as village works.

Permanganate of potash was used to disinfect wells.

Q. 97.—In pauper wards, which as stated above rarely contained more than 82 inmates, ordinary sanitary arrangements were made by the Hospital Assistant in charge, who was provided with a sweeper for the purpose.

At large kitchens a sweeper was entertained to keep the surroundings clean under the supervision of the person in charge of the kitchen. As no one lived in the kitchen there was no difficulty, and I never found either poor-house hospitals or kitchens in an unsanitary condition, and in the majority of kitchens no sweeper was necessary.

Q. 98.—The grain shops were inspected adequately. Rarely such inspections disclosed the sale of inferior or unwholesome grain.

Q. 99.—So far as it came to my notice, food was supplemented very little by wild products.

Q. 100.—There was practically no immigration from Native States.

Q. 101.—See above.

Q. 102.—The orphans are not yet disposed of.

Q. 103.—I have no suggestions.

Q. 104.—I heard complaints of the high price charged by the Railway Company for carrying *karbi* to Berar. But I cannot say that the high price of this or of imported grain was due to any defect in railway working.

Q. 104 (a).—Exports and imports by road into Bhandara town reported by the municipality weekly, information being based on octroi levied and octroi refunds granted. The information was fairly reliable so far as concerned Bhandara town.

Q. 105.—No. I heard no complaints from employers of private labour that owing to the attractions of relief-works they experienced difficulty in obtaining labourers.

Q. 106.—There has been a substitution of broadcast for transplanted rice, and a shrinkage in the area under wheat and linseed. The cultivation of *juar* and *tur* has increased. There has been decrease in double-cropping. Area double-cropped in 1893-94 was 216,187 acres, in 1899-1900, 7,325 acres only. Rice transplanted has shrunk from 392,417 to 186,852 acres, while broadcast has increased from 104,915 acres to 126,382 acres. Wheat has decreased from 129,377 acres to 53,188 acres.

Q. 107.—The practice of paying wages in grain still survives in this district. I did not find any tendency to substitute a cash for a grain wage. Cash wages on transplanting were lower than those paid in ordinary years despite rise in prices.

Q. 108.—One of the chief departures from the provisions of the Famine Code was the precedence in time given to village relief which was justified by the commencement of the distress in the rainy season at a time when work relief was inconvenient.

Q. 110.—Non-official agency was made use of in employment of malguzars as managers of village works. I do not think there is any scope for its extension.

Q. 111.—There was no change in the system of work. I could not find that such changes as occurred in the task, the scale of wages, or the mode of calculating fines, had any effect on the number of people seeking relief or the death-rate.

Drafting to a distant work led but little to wandering. I cannot say that it affected the death-rate.

Q. 112.—Nothing has come to my notice to indicate that the massing of people on large works tends to disorganize family life or to weaken social restraints or to relax moral ties.

R. G. PANTIN,

*Offg. Deputy Commissioner,*

*Bhandara.*

BHANDARA:

*The 4th January 1901.*

*The President.*—What percentage of the normal did the *kharif* of 1899 represent?

A.—The rice was practically wiped out. The other *kharif* crop was about 60: American notation.

Q.—What crops constitute the *kharif* harvest in your district?

A.—Rice and *juar*.

Q.—Rice, *juar*, millets, maize, I suppose?

A.—To a very small extent maize.

Q.—Out of 100 acres what proportion would be rice and of what proportion would all the other crops be?

A.—Rice would take up about 60 per cent.

Q.—And all the others about 40? What is the average yield of rice? What percentage of a normal crop was the rice yield of 1899?

A.—Nothing.

Q.—You had a 5-inch fall of rain out of an average of 8 inch in June. You had only 2 inches out of 16 in July, and you had 9 inches out of 13 in August, and you had nearly 3 inches out of 8 inches in September. That would be something?

A.—Well, the defective rainfall in July was a serious obstacle. It withered all the rice crops.

Q.—At the end of August I might say you had practically an 8-anna crop on the ground?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What was the outturn of the other *kharif* crop?

A.—Six to 8 annas.

Q.—What is the general food of the cultivating classes and the day labourers in your district? Do they usually eat *juar* or millets, or do they eat rice?

A.—We have always taken *juar* to be the staple food in the district, but this time we found it was not so.

Q.—What do you mean?

A.—*Juar* was very little sold in the camps. All the workers took to rice. [See note (i) of Summary.]

Q.—You took rice as your staple food?

A.—We did that only when we found there was no *juar* selling in the camp.

Q.—When did you first apprehend crop failure?

A.—In August.

Q.—Did you apprehend crop failure before or after you received the orders of the Government?

A.—Before.

Q.—Well, then, when you received the orders what did you do?

A.—We took up the formation of famine circles.

Q.—You set the Famine Code in operation. What was the unit? What is your lowest officer?

A.—The *patwari*.

Q.—How many villages had you under him?

A.—It varied greatly according to the work.

Q.—Well, roughly speaking?

A.—From 16 to 20.

Q.—Then over him you had the Circle Officer? How many *patwaris*' charges were grouped into a circle?

A.—We had 242 circles.

Q.—Did you expect the *patwari* to visit each village?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Who did the *patwari*'s work in the organization of famine relief?

A.—He had to do it himself.

Q.—Was an additional *patwari* appointed?

A.—Yes, wherever necessary.

Q.—Were they engaged on famine work or ordinary work?

A.—The *patwari* was responsible for the land revenue work as well as all gratuitous relief.

Q.—When was your organization complete?

A.—The latter half of August.

Q.—What was the first measure of famine relief that you took? Was it gratuitous distribution or was it test-works?

A.—Gratuitous distribution.

Q.—When did you begin your gratuitous distribution?

A.—In October.

Q.—There was some gratuitous distribution before October. There was some in September. When did you join the district?

A.—On the 3rd of December.

Q.—Did you find gratuitous distribution in progress?

A.—Yes.



Q.—And such large numbers of people came upon them that you commenced a system of fining. You raised the task because you considered that works were more largely availed of than was necessary. The result of the action in that way by stiffening the task and so on was to drive people off; and that policy prevailed through January to February?

A.—The policy started about the end of January.

Q.—But there was an increase in the number of those who were gratuitously relieved; that was the state of things in March up to the time when the *mahua* crop came to the assistance of the people. In March was there any relaxation of test?

A.—We stopped excessive fining.

Q.—You stopped fining?

A.—We did not stop fining altogether.

Q.—When you say fining I understand you to mean not fining, but paying people according to the result of their work?

A.—Yes; but in one part of the district they had also a system of fining that was added, viz., non-payment for absentees.

Q.—What do you mean by non-payment for absentees?

A.—The order was to pay the mates; but departmentally in some camps it was ordered that the mate was to have his gang present; and any people who were not present, were not paid; and that had in my opinion a very bad effect.

Q.—And this strictness was relaxed in March?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you attribute to the relaxation the increase of number in April?

A.—I put it down more to the failure of *mahua*; but I think the people who left the camps on account of the fining came back.

Q.—At the end of May did you transfer any people and bring them upon gratuitous relief?

A.—Yes; dependants: no able-bodied adults.

Q.—Was that in May or June?

A.—That was towards the end of May.

Q.—I may attribute the great decrease, in numbers, in June, to the transfer from the works to the village gratuitous relief?

A.—Yes, and in the hope of the rains, working people returning to their villages and finding no employment.

Mr. Nicholson.—Speaking generally, do you suppose that the whole of the labouring population came on to relief, at the highest point of relief?

A.—Yes and some tenants with small holdings; there were very few proprietors.

Q.—Referring to question 10 you say the backbone of your works was the large public works. Had you a regular programme ready before hand?

A.—No.

Q.—Had you any annual programme prepared in advance?

A.—No.

Q.—You think the irrigation by wells could not be easily extended in your district?

A.—No; i.e., by the people themselves; they are too poor.

A. { The President.—We have come down to the beginning of the rains. We had it that there was a great increase of people on relief in the commencement under circumstances which would seem to you and to the other authorities, to be indicative of some relaxation; and you stiffened the rates and the task, and the result was a reduction which went to a certain distance and reached its minimum in March; and then for certain reasons you commenced to relax your strictness, and that relaxation continued up to May. And then you ordered the people to go home to their villages. The result was a drop on the works and a rise on gratuitous relief.

Am I right or not?

A.—We opened kitchens and extended village works.

Q.—Did you open village works in June?

A.—We opened village works in May.

Q.—Can you give any figures of the number of village works that were opened before May and the number that were opened in May?

A.—I could, but not now.

Q.—Am I right in concluding that the drop was owing to kitchens?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Why didn't you open village works?

A.—That is in June, we could not very well carry on village works. We were anticipating rains about the 10th or the 15th.

Q.—Why did you send them on to kitchens? Why didn't you assume that they would not get employment in the ordinary course of operations in their villages, and that failing relief they would starve?

A.—We assumed that things would take their ordinary course. Then, finding there was no employment and no rains came, we had to extend kitchens.

Q.—I do not think that is the sequence. You told them to stay away on the ground that they would get food in the villages?

A.—No, my order for kitchens was not issued in June.

Q.—Well, you told the people to go back to their villages and they did go in large numbers. Why didn't you trust to the ordinary operations in agricultural life with providing employments in their own villages?

A.—Well, I do not think the policy was to send them back from villages to the kitchens.

Q.—Under the policy of offering cooked food to every man who went to the kitchens to eat it, the result was that you had an enormous increase; and my point is, it would have been wise to abstain from offering that inducement to come to the kitchens and to tell them, you must go and get ordinary employment. People are paid in your district, I suppose, by grain?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Can you give me any reason for not waiting any longer for the ordinary demand and supply of agricultural labour to come into play; and if you found it was insufficient, can you give me any reason, for your district?

A.—I had the increasing mortality.

Q.—Can you explain to me why the mortality jumped up simultaneously with such a large increase in gratuitous relief?

A.—The great disturbing factor in June was the outbreak of cholera.

Q.—Was it in the public works camps?

A.—Yes.

Q.—To what do you attribute the outbreak of cholera?

A.—It came in from the Bhandara district.

Q.—What did you do?

A.—We moved the camp after a certain number of deaths.

Q.—The increase of the mortality was altogether due to cholera?

A.—Yes.

Q.—It has been said that people hung about the kitchens for shelter; but kitchens were never intended to be shelters; never intended to be poorhouses, they were only intended for persons coming for food. Now do you think that there is any foundation for the statement that the want of shelter in the kitchens produced mortality; and also for the further statement that the character of the food distributed in the kitchens caused bowel complaints?

A.—I do not know anything about the former question; but about the second, I should say, there is something in it.

Q.—Let us deal with the first question first. Did people at all hang about the kitchens; did they remain there from one meal to another?

A.—No, the kitchen was opened at a certain time; there was no tally taken at that time. Everybody with a ticket was admitted.

Q.—What do you mean by the ticket?

A.—Kitchen ticket.

Q.—Who gave the ticket?

A.—The *muharrir*.

Q.—No person was allowed to go into the kitchen unless he had a ticket? What were the qualifications that admitted into the kitchen?

A.—In the first place signs of emaciation.

Q.—Anybody was entitled to get food?

A.—We never allowed people to come in without a ticket.

Q.—After a man got a ticket it lasted as long as he pleased?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Could people take their food away to their homes?

A.—No. They had to eat it on the spot.

Q.—Was there any shelter provided?

A.—Always.

Q.—For how many?

A.—My kitchens were always built to contain a thousand.

Q.—Did the people remain in that shelter from one day to another, or did they always go home?

A.—They went home.

Q.—The second point is the character of the food?

A.—They had a big meal in the middle of the day.

Q.—Are you in favour of giving dry grain and letting people cook their own food at home?

A.—If it could be done under supervision.

Q.—Your mortality continued to be very high. It was 8.63 in August and it was 9.35 in September. It was more than twice the normal mortality. To what do you attribute that?

A.—I attribute that to a great extent to foreign food.

Q.—This mixture of rice and dal?

A.—Foreign rice.

Q.—Was rice imported from Bengal or Burma?

A.—Yes; nearly all.

Q.—Imported by private persons?

A.—And partly by the Government.

Q.—Not through *bantias*?

A.—I had to get it out into the district myself.

B. { Q.—Could you not arrange with the *bantias* to supply locally?

A.—They refused.

Q.—It was imported to the railway station by the local *bantias*. Did you even find any difficulty in transporting by the railway?

A.—Very great.

Q.—Well, when was your relief finally closed?

A.—Not till December.

Q.—Did you close by villages or by knocking off individuals?

A.—We eliminated from kitchens.

Q.—I am talking of October?

A.—Well, then we closed kitchens wholesale.

Q.—Now Mr. Coxon, do you think from your experience that more people came upon kitchen relief than really needed it?

A.—I should certainly think that in the commencement of the rains there was a certain number of people who should not have been there.

Q.—Would you say 20 per cent. could have got on without it?

A.—No: I would not go to that extent.

Q.—Do you think these were people such as landlords or *malguzárs* who found difficulty in getting labour at the usual rates?

A.—None at all. There was a circular issued to all the landlords; they only had to apply to the kitchens and then the man who refused to go, got no food.

Q.—Can you tell us whether the cultivated area for the current year has diminished?

A.—It is slightly in excess of the normal area.

Q.—Then there was an abundance of seed?

A.—Not abundance. I think it was sufficient. Rice seed was, however, very short, short to the extent of 50 per cent.

Q.—Was seed obtained by *tagávi* advances?

A.—To a very great extent.

Q.—Did you adopt the principle of joint responsibility? Did you find that it was usually accepted by the people, or that there was difficulty in taking it?

A.—None whatever.

Q.—Do you think that the system could in any way be expanded, of giving *tagávi* loans to individuals by forming an association for giving *tagávi* loans?

A.—Yes; I certainly think that could be done.

Q.—And those associations when once established probably would enable people to obtain seed grain or other agricultural necessities at a cheaper rate? Do you think such association is possible?

A.—Yes; certainly.



### Summary.

MR. COXON, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, RECALLED AND SUPPORTED BY  
MR. NEDHAM, COMMISSIONER, GAVE EVIDENCE AS TO THE  
MORTALITY IN CHANDA.

Cholera began in May. It broke out first in the villages. Then it reached the works, and a certain number of deaths occurred. We moved the camps on. Every attention was paid to the water-supply. It was the first thing looked to before opening a work. When cholera appeared the wells all round were permanganated by the police and the famine staff. About half the total mortality was among young children. The system of registration of deaths was such that a death could not be shown twice over in the returns.

*The witness subsequently wrote :—*

With reference to the President's summary at A of my oral evidence and the following questions and answers, I would like to add—

- (1) That the general policy adopted towards the beginning of the rains was to assist the dependants and the weakly gangs from the camps back to their villages by the payment of a dole calculated to last them for about 10 to 15 days.
- (2) It was no part of our policy to pay working adults to leave the camps or to put them on gratuitous relief when they went to their villages.
- (3) We did wait for the ordinary demand and supply of agricultural labour to come into play. When kitchens were first opened, they were not free to all. No able-bodied adult got food in any of my kitchens at any time unless he was prepared to do a light task, and the order was—no work no food, in the case of all able-bodied adults.
- (4) It was only late in June when we found that there was absolutely no demand for labour—(the rice in the district was all sown quite a month later than usual)—and the mortality going up steadily week by week that we relaxed the rules; and when cholera broke out in epidemic form kitchens were made open to all who liked to resort to them. The task, however, though a light one, such as carrying grain, weeding, &c., was always enforced, and it was only the weakly and the children who got food for nothing.

When I say the *bantias* failed, I mean they failed me when the rains broke. Previous to the rains the food supply was sufficient; but when the difficulty of transporting rice in a district like Chanda came to be faced, the want of a big man or a few big men was much felt.

*The witness also added the following notes :—*

- (i). It would be more correct to say that rice was substituted for *juár* owing to the difficulty and labour involved in grinding the latter.
- (ii). Revenue Inspectors also checked all measurements of village works within their charges, and over and above this there was later on, a special overseer appointed for the express purpose of checking measurements in each charge.



Answers by S. W. COXON, Esq., U. C. S., Deputy Commissioner, Chanda, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

Q. 1.—Normal. In 1897-98 the all-round total was 112 in A. N., while for 1898-99 it was 80.

Q. 2.—Yes. The sowings were 324,746 acres as against 323,475 for 1893-94, which we take as a normal year. 1893-94 is the normal of the past ten years from 1890-91.

Q. 3.—The average rainfall for this district is 48 inches. The fall in the rainy season of 1899 was 19.30, or a percentage of 40 as the average. The rains ceased on the 15th September. The distribution was as under—

			Average.	Actual.
June ...	...	...	8.38	5.29
July ...	...	...	16.35	2.17
August ...	...	...	13.53	8.98
September ...	...	...	7.80	2.86

Q. 4.—The cropped area in 1898-99 was in excess of the normal by 10 per cent. The actual kharif yield was 90 A. N. It may then be taken as a normal harvest.

Q. 5.—Sixty per cent. Petty cultivators 35 per cent. Labourers 24 per cent.

Q. 6.—Emaciation was observed by both Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner while on tour, and as there was no demand whatever for labour to enable those requiring food to purchase it, village relief was commenced when necessary on the 27th December.

Q. 7.—The total failure of the rice crop, which is the principal crop of the district, and the very poor condition of the other kharif crops; the high price of food-grains, the cheapest of which was in many places unobtainable at 11 seers to the rupee; the emaciated condition of the working classes, coupled with the absence of any means of employment, and grain-looting, which commenced in the Brahmपुरi tahsil and extended to the Chimur par-gana.

Q. 8.—Village relief by the distribution of cash doles to the dependants of labourers. No tests were applied at the time.

Q. 9.—(a) Yes. The district was divided into 14 charges, relief-works were located, and surveys as far as possible completed.

(b) Yes.

Q. 10.—Large public works. In January 1900 a programme of village works costing 3½ lakhs was prepared and sanctioned.

Q. 11.—(1) Opening of Government forests.

(2) Kitchens—(i) Elsewhere.

(ii) On works.

Q. 12.—(1) The Charge Officer and Famine Staff as per instructions contained in Commissioner's letter No. 6643-A, dated 17th August 1899.

(2) The police.

Q. 13.—(1) Rupees 24,154 were disbursed under the Agriculturists' Loans Act and Rs. 5,553 under the Land Improvement Loans Act. (2) For the rabi crops of 1899-1900. (3) Under the usual conditions.

Q. 14.—This is mainly a rice-producing district, but if cost be no consideration, irrigation wells could with advantage be made for sugarcane and garden crops.

(2) About 10 feet. Digging was done for irrigation, but all our efforts were centred in digging kutchra well for the water-supply, both for man and beast.

Q. 15.—Repairs of village roads was first taken in hand as relief works by the Charge Officers with funds furnished by the District Council, but as very little money was

available and distress was deepening daily, these were quickly followed by the formation of four Public Works camps.

The Chanda Municipality also took in hand the enlargement and deepening of two tanks under the supervision of the Revd. A. Wood.

Q. 19.—Large public works were opened at Mul, Garchiroli, Talodhi and Chimur.

Q. 20.—Under the control of Public Works Department. Most of the works were well supplied, but in one instance I find Mr. Napier notes that at the Garchiroli Camp there were but 1,500 hammers for 9,000 people.

Q. 21.—Works were divided into charges and each charge was supposed to provide for a maximum of 6,000. The maximum was in most cases exceeded. The pressure was generally met by the opening of subsidiary camps, which were subsequently formed into a separate charge.

Q. 22.—Yes. The Public Works Department can best reply to the rest of this question. In my opinion the hutting in some of the camps was deficient.

Q. 23.—(1) Free to all. (2) No. (3) No.

Q. 24.—This is a difficult question to answer in a district such as this is, with large zamindari and forest tracts, but in the Chimur (Khalsa) charge, two camps, viz., Chimur and Chargaon, containing roughly 10,000 people, were found sufficient until April for a population estimated at 51,000. As distress increased these works were supplemented by the extension of kitchen and village relief and village works.

A further difficulty in this district is contained in the second portion of this question. People were frequently found in camps 100 miles away from their houses, having halted at different camps on their way; and these were generally the people in the worst condition. I attribute it entirely to the novelty of the experience and the idea that if they went further, they would fare not worse but better.

Q. 25.—Camp officials were in no way subordinate to Charge Officers. The Public Works Department Officers were entirely independent regarding the interior economy of their camps and the manner in which the work was to be done. The Deputy Commissioner could issue no direct order at an inspection, and any suggestion he made had to meet with the approval of the Executive Engineer. In a district like Chanda, where the visits of the Executive Engineer were necessarily few and far between, this was in my opinion a mistake and frequently caused a deal of trouble and delay.

Q. 26.—(1) Yes. From all classes. They included in this district one Native Officer, 5 private gentlemen, 2 from Educational Department, 3 from the Secretariat, 1 from Land Record Staff, 1 Municipal Accountant, 1 Court of Wards Official, 1 Naib-Tahsildar, 1 Deputy Clerk of Court. The pay started on Rs. 100 per mensem, rising by monthly increments of 10 per mensem to Rs. 150.

The Officers-in-charge, as they were called were directly subordinate to the Sub-Divisional Officer, Public Works Department.

(2) Yes.

Q. 27.—It was his duty to refer the matter to his Sub-Divisional Officer, and the Sub-Divisional Officer after reference to the Deputy Commissioner or Executive Engineer could then alter the task. He was not authorized to change the task without sanction.

Q. 28.—The gangs varied from 30 to 40, and were as far as possible maintained mauzawar and by families with complete success.

Q. 29.—Class I.—Able-bodied men

Class II.—Adults over 14 years of age unfit to be classed in Class I, and women.

Class III.—Working children between 8 and 14

scale of pay.  
... be ...  
... 8  
... 8

*Fide* Circular letter No. F-41, dated the 22nd January 1900.



Q. 30.—The modification introduced by this Circular was in my opinion a sound one. It resulted in economy, simplified the checking of the gangs, and gave all a fair day's wage for a fair task. The ordinary khalsa woman in these parts is not able to dig and the classification of old men, women and immature youths as carriers was the only possible one. Had women been kept in Class I, I do not think it would have been possible to enhance the tasks and reduce the numbers wholesale as we did here in January and February. The only alteration I would recommend would be the substitution of kitchen food for Class III. My experience is that this class was the first to show emaciation, and I attribute this to the "commandeering" by the parents of the wages earned by the children. I would not feed them gratuitously, but I would give them food instead of wages.

Q. 31.—The intermediate system was in force from the beginning throughout the district.

Q. 32.—I do not think that the intermediate system can be improved upon as a system of relief for acute distress or actual famine. By a system of payment by results the man of 80 has to do the work of a man in the prime of life, and they must accordingly suffer. With the intermediate system, however, the old people can join in the carrying task, or if not fit for that, they can be placed in the weakly gangs. I have had no actual experience of the system of payment by results. But I cannot imagine it as suitable to a famine-stricken district even if taken in hand in ample time.

Q. 33.—Public Works Department.

Q. 34.—Adequate. Whatever wage is given the worker will unfortunately save, even if he has to starve himself and his family. And I came across a number of people who had saved a few annas, but invariably with noticeable deterioration in their physical condition. In one case in the Chanda camps a man died from cholera just outside my gate. As he was in an emaciated condition, I instituted enquiries on the spot and found that he had been working in the camp for the last four months on a full digger's wage. His family, which consisted of a grandmother fed as a dependant, a wife and two sisters, all Class II, declared that every pie they had earned had been spent on food. But search resulted in the find of a bag of copper with the wife containing Rs. 2-4-0. Copper coin returned freely.

Q. 35.—In the beginning a rest-day wage was given. To reduce numbers in January it was stopped, but again resumed in the hot weather. Workers were never allowed to receive more than the full wage.

I am of opinion that in the cold weather, if the famine is taken in time, no rest-day wage is necessary up till say the beginning of May, when the people have to be treated with more consideration and care owing to the unusual conditions of having to work throughout the day. It had to be continued throughout the rains in the rain camps, as for many days at a time the workers were not able to earn their full wages, and this I fancy will generally be the case.

I do not advocate the payment of a rest-day wage in the cold weather because it is of necessity the commencement of the famine, and I consider it attracts a number of people who have at that time no business to be in the camps. This, I think, was amply proved in this district when in December we had 88,000 people and in March something under 50,000.

Q. 36.—Our system was no work no wages, and the gang muharir was authorized to pay strictly according to measurements. This is, I think, a mistake, and no one but the Officer-in-charge should be allowed to fine 50 per cent. or more of the wages earned. I frequently had to complain of excessive and indiscriminate fining, and in many cases and in fact in most found ample grounds for short work, which did not attract the attention of the gang muharir.

Besides it is from every point of view bad to give so low paid a subordinate such unlimited discretion.

Q. 37.—Already answered above.

Q. 38.—Daily, if this is necessary.

Q. 39.—

Q. 40.—To the gang mate and it worked entirely satisfactorily.

Q. 41.—I have not the time at my disposal to answer this.

Q. 42.—Already answered.

Q. 43.—19 chittaks. Children and dependants were fed in kitchens. The latter were as a rule made to do odd jobs about the camp.

Q. 44.—Never.

Q. 45.—No muster rolls were kept, only gang registers.

Q. 46.—By the Deputy Commissioner with the sanction of the Commissioner. At first the equivalent was fixed on grain which is supposed to be the staple food of the district, but finding it had as a matter of fact no sale in the camps, I latterly took a mean between it and rice. Small variations were ignored.

Q. 47.—Public Works Department.

Q. 48.—By the Deputy Commissioner with the approval of the Commissioner.

Q. 51.—This was done here to reduce the camps after the rains had set in, and the transfers were invariably successfully made.

Q. 52.—They were taken in hand vigorously in April, and formed a very important and useful part of our relief operations.

Q. 53.—Tanks, roads, sanitation works, agricultural operations.

Q. 54.—(b) Civil agency. (ii) Through landholders and others, except in the Chowki charge, where the "amani" system was in force. The reason for this is given in detail in my Famine Report.

Q. 55.—The Charge Officer fixed the task, and the Circle Officers, Tank Overseer and Patwaris were responsible for measuring the "pachoris" on the ground.

The Circle Officer and Tank Overseer made measurements for general check of the work done, but for payments the work was measured daily by the mukaddam.

The payment was by results and the money was paid by the mukaddam on the completion of a "pachori."

Q. 56.—(1) No. (2) One pice less than that obtainable in the camps. But to try and complete our tank scheme the wages were afterwards equalised. (3) Strictly by tickets given by Charge Officers.

Q. 57.—The tickets for village works were confined to poor tenants and agricultural labourers. The ordinary labourer and wanderer was passed on to nearest camp. It was successful.

Q. 58.—Being confined to certain classes of persons as above, no comparison can be made between camps and village works. Personally I am of opinion that there should be no distinction as regards wages, for though in the village work the villager is at home, he has in a time of famine many difficulties to contend with which the worker in the camps has not. For instance, he has to go—sometimes a very long way—for his water, his grain is, as a rule, much dearer, and if he falls sick he can earn no wages.

Q. 59.—Small village works, except agricultural operations (B list), have no place in my scheme of village works. But as a stop-gap in the rains they may often prove very useful. In the past famine they did, inasmuch as they compelled people to do a day's work for a wage in place of gratuitous relief.

Q. 60.—The fodder operations were specially undertaken to relieve the aboriginal tribes of this district, and they were no doubt of immense value as a means of subsistence to these people. In the zamindaris where they principally reside they at first fought shy of all relief. The grass-cutting, however, suited them and they took to it. When this form of relief was closed, it required but little persuasion to get them to try another and eventually we had no difficulty with them.

Q. 61.—Answered above. They were controlled in the khalsas by the Divisional Forest Officer; in the zamindaris by the Deputy Commissioner.

Q. 62.—Yes. They were employed on village works after the rains had set in. B list was first started in July and continued until the end of October. A very great deal of good and

useful work, specially field work, was done by this means. The people were formed into gangs under a mate and payments were made strictly by results at a rate one pice below what was being paid in the village for private labour. Payments were made daily by the mukaddam under the supervision of the Famine staff, and the results were generally satisfactory.

Q. 63.—None.

Q. 64.—No. Except in very few cases it was found that they took readily to the camps when really pressed for food. On reaching the camps they were generally employed on work suitable to their trade.

Q. 66.—The Government forests were thrown open and grazing allowed free everywhere. Grass depôts were formed all along the banks of the Wainganga and fodder was free to all those who could obtain an order from the Charge Officer for it. In other cases it was given on loan. Every effort was made to supply water by digging wells and trenches and the people cordially co-operated in this work.

Q. 67.—4,741 tons of baled grass were supplied to tracts, including other districts, suffering from scarcity of fodder.

Q. 68.—Gratuitous Relief—

(a) In kitchens.

(b) Either in kitchens or by cash dole.

Q. 69.—Kitchen relief, on the ground that the recipient had to eat the food supplied to him or leave it. He was not allowed under any circumstances to take it away. Again, the relief given in these institutions was not after April wholly gratuitous. All had to perform some light task, and the condition was no work, no food.

Q. 70.—Previous to the cholera scare, kitchen relief was only extended to emaciated persons and children. Any others applying were given a meal and then forwarded on through the police to the nearest work. In the latter end of June, owing to the exodus from the works in the first place, and later on to the conditions prevailing, the kitchens were made temporarily free to all. I feel absolutely certain that this order saved a number of lives in this district. It was as a temporary measure the only possible way of keeping the people alive, as on account of the long continued rainfall and the shortness of seed-grain, the demand for field labour was non-existent.

Q. 71, 72 and 73.—None.

Q. 74.—On the 30th June there were 131 kitchens open, and on the 8th September 243 main kitchens, with about 150 subsidiary kitchens.

Q. 75.—Previous to the rains the meals were given one in the morning of ambul and one in the afternoon of khicheri. But when the rains broke one meal at 11 A. M. was the universal rule.

The ration was :—

Children under	4	...	1 measure.
Do.	4 to 7	...	1½ measures.
Do.	8 to 10	...	2 „
Do.	11 to 14	...	2½ „
Adults	...	...	3 „

(each measure contained 3 chizaks.) No food was allowed to be taken away.

Q. 76.—The limit five miles from the nearest camp.

Q. 77.—Already answered.

Q. 74.—Nil.

Q. 75.—The raywari. They were checked by Circle Officers, Charge Officers, and all touring officers, and they were inspected and frequently eliminated by all of the above with the exception of the patwari, who was not allowed to strike off any name. He could only make a recommendation to this effect.

Q. 76.—Payments were made monthly in cash by Circle Officers through mukaddams.

Q. 77.—To kotwars' dependants in the case of those kotwars who were unable to support them.

Q. 78.—Marars, Manas, Kunbis and Kohlis, in very few cases Brahmins. Excepting Rajputs and Brahmins, there was no caste difficulty.

Q. 79.—In the first place mukaddams and subsequently police, schoolmasters and special muharirs. The checking was done by the Famine Staff and all touring officers of every Department, including Divisional Forest Officer, Civil Surgeon, District Superintendent of Police, Deputy Commissioner and his staff.

Q. 80.—A cheap grain shop was opened at Chanda and managed by Mr. Dajji Ganesh, a pleader, under the supervision of the Chanda Town Committee. It was assisted with funds by the Charitable Fund.

Q. 81.—No.

Q. 82.—Rupees 2,31,471 was suspended, or 74 per cent. of the total revenue. Remissions are now under consideration.

Q. 83.—The Village Note-book was our guide in each case, and the scheme propounded by Mr. Fuller was adhered to. Having no recent Settlement figures to go upon, the normal was fixed by ascertaining the average of a number of years—generally 8 to 10. The statistics were entered up by the patwari, checked by the Circle Officer, and finally checked and verified by the Charge Officer for the entire charge. The charge statistics then came to office. The calculations were again checked, and my recommendations were based chiefly on the outturns taken together with the local knowledge of myself, my Assistants and Tahsildars. The capacity of the individual to pay was in some cases taken into consideration, specially where it affected the village as a whole; and to illustrate what I mean I would mention the sale of karbi in the Warora and parts of the Chanda tahsil. Karbi fetched a totally unprecedented price as fodder this year, and where it was known that both malguzar and tenants had profited by this means, due allowance was made for it when forwarding my recommendations. The whole matter is again having my attention now for remissions, and I hope to be able to submit my proposals in the course of the next few days.

Q. 84.—The order sanctioning my suspension proposals was received in January for the first kist and in June for the whole year.

Q. 85.—It is impossible to say; but full and definite instructions were issued to each and every Zamindar. The takoli is very light and the Zamindars are not as a rule hard taskmasters or rack-renters.

Q. 86.—No complaints have yet reached me. Rs. 19,000 had to be collected. With the exception of Rs. 5,000 it is all in. I am of opinion that we struck a very fair average, but as the Land Record work is very much in arrear, it is impossible at the present moment to give a definite reply to this answer.

Q. 87.—In August we had 33 per cent. of the population on relief.

The district is an entirely agricultural district, and with the single exception of 1897-98 we have had 10 years of very indifferent harvests. In the famine of 1896-97, all the surplus rice and juari was exported, and though we had a bumper year in 1897-98 it was not sufficient to tide us over the terrible failure of last year. Another important factor in the situation was the entire failure of the mahua crop. This came as a calamity to the people, and the realization of it will be seen in the weekly figures. They are:—

17th March	...	57,000
24th "	...	73,000
31st "	...	72,000
7th April	...	70,000
14th "	...	110,000
21st "	...	110,000
28th "	...	141,000
5th May	...	156,000
12th "	...	169,000
19th "	...	180,000

Q. 88.—In December 1899 it was considered that the numbers in the camps were unduly high. Steps were accordingly taken to apply severe tests. The Sunday wage was stopped, the tasks enhanced, and fining for short work made more strict. The result of these measures was to reduce the numbers on relief from 86,000 in December 1899 to 57,000 in March. Again, in July when the kitchens were free to all, it is impossible to say that the concession was not to a slight extent taken advantage of. But it was distinctly the only thing to be done and there was no help for it. Relief was at no time defective.

Q. 89.—Up to the month of June there were very few, if any proprietors in receipt of relief. In July a few were found in the camps and later on here and there one was found in a kitchen or in receipt of a cash dole. All the tenants in this district have occupancy or absolute-occupancy right, and of the total I would estimate that 30 per cent. were in receipt of State relief.

Q. 90.—In 1896-97 I had great difficulty in inducing parents to allow their children to enter kitchens, and in fact on two occasions there was a general exodus, the first of which was caused by the simple expedient of spreading a rumour that the Government was collecting these children with a view to presenting Her Majesty in honour of Her Diamond Jubilee with a necklace of children's eyes. For two consecutive days, no child was to be found in the kitchens in the Chanda or Warora tahsils on account of this rumour. This year there was no such difficulty and no attempt was made as far as I am aware to dissuade people from seeking relief of any sort.

Q. 91.—(1) Yes; and this is proved by the complete stoppage of "porga" on the failure of the rice crop. Such an experience has never before been known in this district.

(2) It was not general, but there were a few known cases.

Q. 92 and 93.—I believe the tests to be sufficient. The kitchens were only free to all for about six weeks, and this was necessitated (1) by the cholera epidemic when the people fled from the camps, and (2) by the continuous rain during July which practically stopped all field and other work.

Q. 94.—The kotwar is the reporting agency.

Q. 95.—I attribute a good deal of our mortality to unsuitable food, and my reasons are given in my famine report. The people are accustomed during the day to drinks of *juari* *ambil*, with perhaps a square meal of rice in the evening, and the substitution of the one heavy meal of rice in the middle of the day, and this of a rice which they were not accustomed to, is said to have caused diarrhoea, dysentery and such like bowel-complaints.

Q. 96.—A large supply of permanganate of potash was provided in the camps and it was used as required. It was also given to the Charge Officers and Police and was freely used by both. No objection has been made to the use of it, and in fact the people came in time to appreciate its effects and prefer the "lal" pani to any other.

Impure water no doubt affected the general health, but during the cholera epidemic I am inclined to think the scarcity of water was an assistance to us in stamping out the disease, as it enabled us to disinfect the drinking water-supply.

Q. 97.—We were always short of sweepers in the district, but Marars and Pardhans came to our assistance, and the sanitation, particularly in the camps, was, I think, extremely good.

Q. 98.—Yes. The food-supply was constantly inspected by the Civil and Medical Staffs as well as by the Police. I know of no authenticated case of supplying bad grain though a good deal was of inferior quality.

Q. 99.—Largely in the zamindari tracts, where the wild roots and plants form part of the daily food. *Kaong* was also resorted to wherever it was to be found and seemed to agree with the constitution.

Q. 100.—Nothing to speak of.

Q. 102.—All orphans have been handed over to the Revd. A Wood, of the Episcopal Church of Scotland. About 200 in all have been handed over, some of whom have already been reclaimed by their parents.

Q. 103.—The heads are suitable, but in my opinion Object IV should be made Object I.

Q. 104.—No.

Q. 104 (a).—Weekly statistics from the railway are the only reliable ones in this district.

Q. 105.—Yes, in July the complaint was fairly general and an order was then issued to all requiring labour to be supplied from the kitchens. Any able-bodied adult who refused the call was at once turned out of the kitchen. "B" list subsequently supplied labour for poor tenants who were unable to pay for it.

Q. 106.—Yes, the percentage of ringni juar in 1893-94 was 24; for the famine year it is shown as 62. Rice on the other hand has gone down in the same period from 61 to 28. Wheat has also fallen from 24 to 9, and linseed from 21 to 15.

The cultivators are beginning to realize that it is not safe to carry all their eggs in one basket.

NOTE.—The double-cropping has decreased seriously from the year 1893-94 as will be seen from the following figures :—

Years.				Acres.
1893-94	...	...	...	51,405
1894-95	...	...	...	53,583
1895-96	...	...	...	42,368
1896-97	...	...	...	24,859
1897-98	..	...	...	41,430
1898-99	...	...	...	41,933
1899-1900	...	...	...	1,383

Q. 107.—Whole-time servants are paid in grain. Harvesting is also paid in grain. Weeding and transplantation operations are universally paid for in cash. In fact cash is only paid when grain is short.

Q. 108.—Alteration in the classification of workers as already referred to above, and the extension of village relief to the dependants of kotwars, are the only important departures, and both were in my opinion necessary.

Q. 109.—I had but one Staff Corps Officer and one Native Officer of the Indian Army. For Charge Officers I would have none but experienced Revenue Officers, either Extra-Assistant Commissioners, Tahsildars or Officers from the Settlement Department. For Officers-in-charge Non-Commissioned British Officers with a good knowledge of the language would, I think, be the most suitable, but failing them I would, as suggested in my famine report, strongly recommend the appointment of a European Officer to the charge of every three to four Public Works Department camps.

Q. 110.—Mukaddams, *i. e.*, resident mukaddams, were of very great assistance, and the non-official members of our local Committee were invaluable to the Charge Officers, who all report very favourably of them. In fact I think we utilized the non-official agency to its full extent in this district.

Q. 111.—Public Works Department.

Q. 112.—The family kept as far as possible together in all camps, and where members were drafted into different gangs, as was inevitably the case on some occasions, it was always found that they lived and mealed together. Beyond perhaps the provision of a little better hutting to secure better protection to the inmates and more privacy to the female, I don't think much can be done. I received no complaints beyond the everlasting one of too much work and too little wages, and native gentlemen whom I have consulted on the subject agree with me in thinking that the people were under the circumstances well looked after and had little or nothing to complain about.

CHANDA;

The 6th January 1901.

W. COXON,  
Official Deputy Commissioner.

37

EVIDENCE OF MESSRS. W. A. NEDHAM, COMMISSIONER, NAGPUR DIVISION, AND L. S. CAREY, COMMISSIONER OF SETTLEMENTS AND AGRICULTURE (TAKEN SIMULTANEOUSLY).

*The President.*—You succeeded Mr. Carey in the charge of the division?

*Mr. Nedham.*—Yes.

*Q.*—The scarcity occurred when you were a Divisional Commissioner?

*Mr. Carey.*—Yes; about the middle of July. All through July the rains were very uncertain.

*Q.*—Then in August you met?

*A.*—Yes; on the 10th of August; prior to that a weekly memorandum was called for by the Chief Commissioner.

*Q.*—How did you report the state of crops?

*A.*—In the weekly reports.

*Q.*—Crop reports published in the *Gazette*?

*Mr. Carey.*—No; something very much more elaborate.

*Q.*—You were here in 1897?

*Mr. Nedham.*—Yes.

*Q.*—During the rains of 1896?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—How did the rains of 1899 compare with the rains of 1896? Were they greater or less?

*A.*—Very much less in 1899.

*Q.*—Was there a good *kharif* in the division?

*A.*—No, not at all; only two annas or three annas at the outside. In some parts the crops entirely failed.

*Q.*—What was the chief crop?

*A.*—Rice in three districts; *juar* in two.

*Q.*—In August you had your meeting, and after that the local administration issued a series of orders. In one of these orders it was stated that public works would only be begun on the 15th of October?

*Mr. Carey.*—I think the original intention was 15th of September; but we recommended that it should not be done until the 15th of October.

*Q.*—The orders were that before opening public works gratuitous relief should be set on foot and in some instances gratuitous relief was given to able-bodied people?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Having regard to the general experience of famine, do you not think it would have been safe to allow things to go on, to postpone gratuitous relief and commence test-works?

*A.*—The feeling we had was this; if the people were not provided with gratuitous relief but were sent to works, they would probably die of diarrhoea, dysentery, and contract all sorts of diseases on the works.

*Q.*—Would not that danger or apprehension have been avoided if you had employed them on test-works? The suggestion is that these people would have been able to pull on until the opening of the regular relief works as there was private charity?

*A.*—I am afraid not; they were still struggling to recover from the previous famine of 1896.

*Q.*—But they had two good seasons?

*Mr. Nedham.*—One good and one fair.

*Q.*—The *kharif* of 1897-98 was good?

*A.*—Fair.

*Q.*—In 1898-99?

*A.*—They had a very bad *rabi*; we had to give remissions in a certain number of villages.

*Q.*—The camps were under the subordination of the Public Works Department, the Sub-Divisional Officer?

*A.*—Yes, in all professional matters this officer was independent of the Deputy Commissioner. The Commissioner exercised general control over these officers, to see how the works were carried on.

*Q.*—Who selected the works?

*A.*—That was settled in the conference of the 10th August. According to that the Deputy Commissioner and the Engineer were to decide and recommend what works were to be opened; that recommendation was made to the Commissioner, and the Commissioner sanctioned the opening of those works.

*Q.*—There are tasks laid down in your Famine Code. With whom lay the power of varying the tasks?

*A.*—With the Public Works under the control of the Deputy Commissioner.

*Q.*—Who fixes the wages?

*A.*—The Deputy Commissioner with the approval of the Commissioner. The Deputy Commissioner actually fixed the prices from time to time, but submitted them to the Commissioner for approval.

Q.—The Deputy Commissioner fixed them according to the market rates then in force?

A.—Yes.

Q.—It might happen in that way that you would have different scales of wages prevailing in two adjacent districts?

A.—Yes; but the Deputy Commissioners of adjacent districts always informed each other of any changes that were made.

Q.—Do you not think it would be better that no scales should be altered except by the Commissioner? If the Deputy Commissioner wishes to make any alteration he should report it to the Commissioner?

A.—I do not know, there would be great delay in some districts, where there are no telegraph or railway lines.

Q.—Do you mean to say that you had different scales prevailing in the same district?

A.—Yes.

Q.—But where the telegraph is available, do you not think that it would be better for the Commissioner to decide upon such a radical change as that?

A.—He has not always the same knowledge of local conditions.

Q.—But he has a wider knowledge?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you ever try anywhere to have gratuitous relief of villages entirely controlled and worked by the village headman or the village *mālguzārs*?

A.—No.

Q.—The determination of the people to receive relief in villages rested with the *mukad-dam* and *patwāri*, and the Revenue Supervising officer?

A.—Yes. Circle officers are called Revenue Inspectors.

Q.—A self acting test like a kitchen is not to be relied upon?

A.—No; many more came than was anticipated.

Q.—Many more also came on relief works than those you had anticipated?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Your evidence points to the fact that more went to the relief works than need have gone?

A.—I think there were 10 per cent. more than need have gone.

Q.—Do you think that people from the agricultural classes went on relief works?

A.—I think a very fair proportion, especially in the Balaghat and Bhandara districts.

Q.—Did they come to a greater extent or less extent this year than in the last famine?

A.—They came more numerously this year; because they were accustomed to the system of relief. They were rather shy in the former famine.

Q.—They went because they were accustomed to relief?

A.—Yes; and because distress was more acute.

Q.—There was a very considerable mortality especially in the rainy months?

A.—Yes.

Q.—That mortality was caused by cholera?

A.—To some extent.

Q.—It has been suggested that it was due to the unusual food which the people received in the kitchens?

A.—Yes; they were accustomed to eat *juār* in the Nāgpur and Wardha districts, but they got rice in the kitchen.

Q.—Did it occur to you that it would have been better not to open kitchens, but to rely upon the distribution of grain or money dole in your division?

A.—I think, generally considered, kitchens were a safer and a better way of giving relief.

Q.—Do you think, Mr. Nedham, the people would have pulled through without very great mortality if the kitchens had not been opened?

A.—No; I do not think so. I think the kitchens were necessary.

Q.—Is there well-irrigation in your division?

A.—I believe not for ordinary cultivation, but merely for garden crops.

Q.—There is no well-irrigation for general use?

A.—No; practically none.

Q.—Is the water much below the level of the surface?

A.—Very much below.

Q.—Would not the stimulating of the construction of wells be acceptable to the people?

A.—I do not know. The soil is not fit; if it was, I think the people would go in for them.

Mr. Carey.—Below black soil you frequently find rock.

Q.—It would not help the people?

A.—Wells would be very expensive to make. Irrigation in black soil is never found to pay.

Q.—When the rains broke or when the rains were about to break, a circular was issued, stating that if people went back to their villages they would get gratuitous relief and there was a large extension of your system of kitchens?

Mr. Nedham.—Yes.

Q.—The result was that the people who received relief at the time on relief works and so on went on gratuitous relief, and there was a very great addition of fresh people?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was there real necessity for that very large extension of gratuitous relief?

A.—Yes.



Q.—When the rains fell would not the agricultural conditions have become re-established and people have got employment in the fields?

A.—I think not, because the circumstances were rather exceptional; the area sown was so much less than usual.

Q.—We are told it was much larger; in Wardah it is much larger; the present crop area is larger than before?

Mr. Carey.—In Chanda there is a great shortage in the rice crop.

Mr. Nedham.—In Chanda and Balaghat there was especial shortage; and the people who could not get employment were very hard pressed; it pressed equally hard on their families.

Q.—This no doubt is true; but this happens always even while there is employment for agricultural labourers.

Mr. Nedham.—There was very little labour in these Provinces from the middle of June to early in August.

Mr. Carey.—It depends entirely upon the character of the rains.

Mr. Nedham.—In the previous year they got from the *bantias* subsistence-money; this year the *bantias* would not give anything.

Mr. Carey.—The rains did not come till the following month.

Q.—Was there any point of dispute between the relief officers and the Public Works Department as regards relief? Between the Commissioner and the Public Works Department?

Mr. Nedham.—No; I do not think so. I do not remember having any kind of difficulty in that way.

Mr. Nicholson.—Cheap grain shops were opened: were they started by private charity?

A.—Yes; there were no official cheap grain shops.

Q.—Do you think that if wells are not acceptable to the people, irrigation tanks would be useful?

A.—Yes. There are a great number of tanks already.

Q.—Would extension be possible?

A.—Yes; I think so.

Q.—How much rice land is irrigated at present from the tanks?

Mr. Carey.—I think it is difficult to generalize. In Bhandara district and Chanda a large portion of the *mālguzāri* land is irrigated from tanks; in almost every village there is tank irrigation.

The President.—You found that the tanks ran dry in this famine?

Mr. Nedham.—Yes; almost all; there were only two tanks in my division in which there was sufficient water for use.



Answers by W. A. NEDHAM, Esq., Commissioner, Nagpur Division, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

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With regard to questions 1 to 5 under the head "Introductory" and 6 to 18 under the head "Preliminary action," I would explain that I did not return from six months' leave till 10th October 1899, after which Mr. Carey, who was acting as Commissioner, was retained on special duty for a short time, to visit each district in the Division and to complete preliminary famine arrangements, while I was asked to devote particular attention to plague work in Nagpur City, which at that time was causing some anxiety. Preliminary arrangements were therefore practically completed before I resumed charge of my ordinary duties. I need only say that I found timely preparation had been made to meet the emergency at every point, the capricious and defective rainfall throughout the season having given due warning of the impending famine.

Q. 19.—Large public works; but small village works were also opened, where necessary, to counteract the rush to the former.

Q. 20.—The large works were under the Public Works Department control: the village works under Charge Officers.

There was not often much delay in opening works, and tools and plant were generally available at short notice.

The scale of supervising establishment was prescribed in advance, and was ready before the work was opened.

Q. 21.—Works were divided into charges. The maximum fixed for each charge was 5,000, but often unavoidably exceeded. In such case, subsidiary Public Works Department camps were started, or village works opened in the vicinity, to relieve the pressure.

Q. 22.—Each charge had its own establishment; details about this question can best be given by the Public Works Department.

Q. 23.—Admission to works was free at the commencement to all persons ready to submit to the labour test.

Later on when works were overcrowded there was selection by tickets.

Distance-test was not insisted on, and residence on works was not compulsory.

Q. 24.—A radius of about 15 miles. As a rule applicants for relief would not go beyond this.

Q. 25.—No; they were independent in purely departmental matters, but Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners were responsible for the general control of large relief-works in all points affecting the efficiency of relief as described in Circular F-26, dated the 6th October 1899.

Q. 26.—For each Public Works Department charge there was an Officer-in-charge appointed by the Commissioner, but directly subordinate to the Public Works Department.

So far as possible he was taken from the Munsiff or Naib-Tahsildar class or officials of equal position in other departments, *e. g.*, Forest, Excise, Educational, &c.

When the supply of officials became exhausted, non-officials had to be employed. Of these, educated sons of malguzars often proved very efficient. The pay was Rs. 100 rising to Rs. 150 by monthly increments of Rs. 10 if work was satisfactory. A large proportion earned the full pay, which shows that most of them did well.

For Civil charges there was a Charge Officer of rather higher grade, *e. g.*, Extra-Assistant Commissioner, Assistant Settlement Officer, Tahsildar, or Staff Corps Officer. They supervised village relief, village works, kitchen relief, &c. Their pay varied according to their position.

Q. 27.—Yes; but under Public Works Department control.

Q. 28 and 29.—Can best be answered by Public Works Department officers.

Q. 30.—No distinction necessary in classification and wages of men and women doing the same work, except in the case of nursing-mothers, for whom half the ordinary task was prescribed by Circular No. F-46.

Q. 31 and 32.—Payment-by-results was adopted throughout, and afforded relief adequately.

Q. 33.—Tasks were altered according to the condition of the people and season of the year.

Q. 34.—The scale of wages was adequate, but not unduly liberal, except perhaps in the early part of the famine, but this was corrected by the adoption of a cheaper rate than the price current under 25 per cent. rule, about which Commissioners were allowed to use discretion as explained in the concluding paragraph of Circular F-41, dated the 22nd January 1900. Some workers saved on their earnings, often however by stinting themselves. Large families on Public Works Department works came off well, as there was no restriction on numbers of members of one family as in the case of village works.

Q. 35.—Rest-day wage was ordinarily given, but occasionally stopped with Commissioner's sanction, when there was a tendency to overcrowd a work and the condition of the people justified such action.

Q. 36.—Circular No. F-13 contains the orders about fining, but information about this, and the three following questions, can best be given by Public Works Department Officers.

Q. 40.—Payment was usually made to the head of the gang. This is convenient and preferable, as individual members of a gang were sometimes absent at time of payment.

Q. 43.—The maximum wage varied according to the grain rate, but practically never exceeded 2 annas per digger; children were fed in kitchens. Weakly persons capable of work were formed into weakly gangs, and paid for piecework at favourable rates, which I consider preferable to the other plan.

Q. 44.—No contractors were employed.

Q. 46.—Under the orders of Deputy Commissioners. It was based on the cheapest food in common use in the district. Variations of less than half a seer were neglected.

Q. 48.—Under orders of Deputy Commissioners, who reported to the Commissioner for information and approval.

Q. 51.—Yes, early in the famine to prevent overcrowding of large Public Works Department works, and later on when the rains commenced, to keep people in their villages: a few people left sometimes in consequence, but results were successful on the whole. Such action merely weeded out those who were not in urgent need of relief.

Q. 52.—A supplementary part to the large Public Works Department works.

Q. 53.—They consisted almost entirely of improvement to existing tanks; a few wells also.

Q. 54.—Some were done by Public Works Department as annexes to their large works, but most were done under supervision of civil agency through malguzars.

Q. 55.—The laying down and measuring up of work was arranged for by Charge Officers on the "pasori" system, varying according to the quality of soil. Wages were paid through malguzars. Work was done under the supervision of Charge Officers and superior Inspecting Officers.

Q. 56.—Task-work system was not adopted. Employment was given only to those who appeared to be in need of relief. Tickets were given by Charge Officers, and occasionally by Circle Officers subject to report to and approval by Charge Officer.

Q. 57.—Yes, besides selecting only those in need of relief, the number relieved in each family was limited. The system was successful inasmuch as it kept down numbers, and weeded out those not in actual need of relief.

Q. 58.—They were not often close together, but when so, there was a tendency to prefer large works to small village works, because there were practically no restrictions about the former, and wages were slightly higher.

Q. 59.—In many ways small village works are preferable, as they do more good to the country and keep people nearer their homes.

Q. 60.—Aboriginal tribes are to be found chiefly in the Balaghat and Chanda districts. Deputy Commissioners can give detailed information about their relief, but I know that it was always adequate, and that the measures taken were successful.

Q. 61.—Forest and fodder works were opened in both districts, controlled by Forest Officers. They were most useful for the relief of aboriginal tribes.

Q. 62.—Yes, B list persons for about 2 months during weeding and transplanting time. Their work was controlled by Charge Officers.

Q. 63.—Yes, chiefly weavers in Nagpur City, and a few other large towns in that district, and to a small extent in Bhandara town.

Mr. Sadasheo G. Subhedar, Extra-Assistant Commissioner, can give detailed information about weaver relief in Nagpur.

Q. 64.—They showed reluctance, but weaver relief in their own craft was ordinarily granted to the better class of weavers only. Common weavers of coarse cloth often went to ordinary relief-works.

Q. 65.—I consider that this special relief to weavers was successful from the point of view of relief, and will also prove economical when the cloth is disposed of when the marriage season commences next month, and when the demand for cloth generally revives as it may be expected to do shortly, with the return of better times.

During the inquiry of the last famine Commission, Mr. Holderness was much struck with the economy of this form of relief.

Q. 66.—There was very little cattle mortality from want of fodder, in fact owing to the abundance of "karbi," the fodder supplies obtained by special arrangements for cutting grass, were in excess of the demand, and much of our grass was taken over by the Conservator of Forests, Bombay.

The chief causes of mortality were want of water; disease, especially early in the rains; and cattle being overworked in carts owing to the high rates of hire prevalent.

Q. 67.—Yes, chiefly in the Chanda District.

Q. 68.—With cooked food in kitchens, and occasionally with cash, where caste prejudices justified this.

Q. 69.—In all districts in this Division the chief form of gratuitous relief was kitchen relief for all in need and unable to work, with village cash relief for those for whom it is prescribed in the Code.

Q. 70.—Village relief was restricted to the classes referred to in paragraph 141 of the report of the Famine Commission of 1880.

Q. 71, 72 and 73.—No poor-houses, only small pauper wards attached to dispensaries, for persons requiring medical treatment.

Q. 74.—Deputy Commissioners should answer the first part of this question. Originally kitchens were located so as to serve a radius of about 3 miles, but in the rainy season this radius was reduced by forming subsidiary kitchens.

Q. 75.—The ration was according to Mr. Fuller's scale. In most places two meals were distributed at about 10 and 4 o'clock; but where numbers were large it was often found possible to distribute only one meal. The general rule was that food was to be consumed on the premises, there were occasional exceptions at crowded kitchens.

Q. 76.—There were several civil kitchens near relief-works, otherwise Public Works Department kitchens would often have been used by others than those for whom they were really intended.

Q. 77.—Free for about two months only in the rains, *i. e.*, from about middle of June to middle of August, before which it was restricted to persons entitled to village relief under the Code, including children.

Q. 75 (a).—Village relief lists were drawn up by Circle Officers or patwaris assisted by mukaddams, and checked by Charge Officers and Famine Inspecting Officers of higher grades.

The recipients were inspected by Circle Officers originally every 10 days, later on every 15 days; by other officers as often as possible.

Q. 76 (a).—Monthly payments in cash at the homes of the recipients.

Q. 77 (a).—I am not aware of any such relief having been given.

Q. 78.—Cooks were of various high castes suited to different localities.

Some reluctance to take cooked food was shown during the early part of the famine by several various classes, but gradually disappeared.

Q. 79.—During the early part of the famine, Schoolmasters, police and other officials, were generally in charge of kitchens, but later on when numbers increased largely, the aid of malguzars and mukaddams was freely invoked, and special muharrihs or managers were appointed to many kitchens.

They were constantly supervised and checked by all Inspecting Officers.

Q. 80.—Cheap grain-shops were opened at a few places, and run by private charity. They were chiefly for the benefit of the respectable poorer classes who hesitated to go to regular relief-works, but found it difficult to get on without some such aid. Admission to the benefit of such shops was regulated by tickets given by the managing committee, and in Municipal towns by ward members. It was a popular and successful form of relief.

Q. 81.—I am not aware of their having had any such effect.

Q. 82 to 86.—Can best be answered by Deputy Commissioners.

Q. 88.—Sometimes slightly excessive when numbers on relief-works ran very high before the rainy season; also during that season when kitchen numbers were highest.

In the former case, I think there were some persons who were not really at the end of their resources, but went on to public works to earn something for small luxuries, *e. g.*, tobacco, &c.

In the latter, there was at one time a certain proportion of able-bodied loafers who preferred kitchen relief with nothing to do, to working for the small wages ordinarily offered by private employers of labour. This was, however, promptly stopped when it was considered safe to restrict kitchen relief.

Q. 90.—People were certainly more ready to come on relief than during the famine of 1897, because they had complete confidence in the measures undertaken for their relief, and many of them had become accustomed thereto during the last famine.

Q. 91.—As shown in my answer to question 88, I think some people accepted State relief without exhausting their own resources, so as to earn a little extra to prevent their being deprived of petty luxuries to which they were accustomed in ordinary times.

Q. 92 and 93.—I would only suggest as a further test, admission by tickets, which was practically tried sometimes with success.

Q. 94.—Registration of births and deaths is worked through the police, mukaddams being responsible for reporting all such.

Q. 95.—I don't think that high mortality in this Division is attributable anywhere to insufficient food, but in Wardha, and in parts of the Chanda District, where the usual food is juari, I think that the general substitution of rice, often some inferior kind of Bengal rice, tended greatly to bring on bowel complaints, which often proved fatal.

During the rains, rice also became often damaged in transport to various kitchens, and was probably not a very wholesome kind of food.

Q. 96.—There was considerable difficulty about water-supply in many places, and with all the efforts used it was impossible to prevent its being often impure and insufficient. The Deputy Commissioner of Chanda gave an illustration of this in his final Famine Report, where he wrote that on cleaning out a well in the Alapilli forest at the end of May, several wild animals were found in it, including bison and sambhur. This shows how hard-pushed such animals were to find water, and it is probable that many other wells were similarly polluted by domestic animals falling into them.

Several new wells were made wherever there was hope of finding water, and old ones were deepened and cleaned. Innumerable kacha wells and "jirias" were made in the beds of rivers and nallas.

Permanganate of potash was freely used to disinfect wells at frequent intervals.

Q. 99.—I don't think there was much general supplementing of food with wild products, except in the case of aboriginals who are accustomed to such products.

Q. 102.—Orphans were distributed between relations, friends, caste-people and missionaries. I have not heard of any being made over to native institutions.

Q. 103.—No, I think the classification is good ; so also the management of the fund.

Q. 105.—Yes, a few ; but it was generally because the wage offered was not considered fair by the labourers, as it was usually the wage paid in ordinary years when the price of grain was much lower.

Q. 106.—In juari districts, I believe the area sown with juari has increased considerably, and the wheat and linseed area has diminished proportionately, but details about this question can best be given by Deputy Commissioners.

Q. 107.—I think that in most parts of the Division the practice of paying wages in grain still prevails. I have not heard of any tendency to substitute a cash for a grain wage. I don't think cash wages have risen in sympathy with the rise in prices, but if so, only to a very small extent.

Q. 108.—I leave this answer for the Chief Secretary, for any such departures were in accordance with the policy of the Local Administration. I cannot however think of any very material departures.

Q. 109.—Staff Corps Officers were employed ; also a few officers of the Native Army. Most of them worked exceedingly well. Some Police and Forest Officers also did extremely well on special famine duty.

Q. 110.—Malguzars were freely utilized in carrying out village works, and generally with success.

As before stated against question 26, well-educated sons of malguzars were occasionally tried as Officers-in-charge of Public Works Department works, and many of them did well. It is difficult, however, to find such men in this Division except in the Nagpur and Wardha Districts.

Q. 111.—I could only reply to this question in a general way ; Deputy Commissioners can give more detailed information.

Q. 112.—I have heard nothing definite to indicate anything of the sort.

CAMP :

The 4th January 1901. }

W. A. NEDHAM,

Commissioner,  
Nagpur Division.





MR. S. M. CHITNAVIS, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, WARDAH.

*The President.*—When did you come to Wardah?

A.—In April 1897.

Q.—Have you more *kharif* than *rabi*?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What crop is most largely grown?

A.—Cotton and *juar*, the *rabi* area is being contracted and *kharif* is increasing.

Q.—To what do you attribute that?

A.—The rainfall is very unsuitable for *rabi*; for the past six or seven years this has been the case. Every year there has been a decrease in the *rabi* area, except in 1897-98.

Q.—Did you notice if there has been an increase in the practice of double-cropping?

A.—There has been no increase.

Q.—In 1899 you say that the *kharif* crop was about 34 per cent. of the normal, that is between 5 and 6 annas?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How do you make out that estimate?

A.—We took it on the area which gave the crop only.

Q.—Did you cause the *jinswar* to be made earlier in 1899 or not?

A.—Rough calculations were made.

Q.—Did you test them in 1899 with any particular care?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you yourself test any particular percentage?

A.—Yes; I must have done about 10 per cent.

Q.—Of the whole district?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You think on the whole you had a five to six-anna crop?

A.—From the restricted area, three-fourths got little or no crop at all.

Q.—Was that the yield for the whole district?

A.—No, if you take the whole district, that will have to be reduced. That 34 per cent. is calculated only on the area that gave any crop.

Q.—What proportion of the whole area gave a crop?

A.—About one-third.

Q.—Then you had only a five-anna crop on one-third of the area?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Then that was no crop at all to speak of?

A.—No; we had cotton and *karbi*; the latter was good over half the district. The *juar* was a failure. There was no *rabi* at all.

Q.—This is a very important modification of your statement. It means that your district was the most distressed of all?

A.—The previous years were rather good, except in the Hinganghat tahsil.

Q.—A one to one and-a-half anna crop is an absolute failure. That is not to be inferred from the statistics of the actual famine. Well, when did you first anticipate that there would be a famine?

A.—Towards the end of July.

Q.—What did you do?

A.—We started our circle organization.

Q.—After getting the orders of Government?

A.—Yes, we had a conference on the 10th of August; before that the forests had been thrown open for free grazing and for the free extraction of fuel.

Q.—Where were you in the famine of 1899?

A.—For three months in Balaghat and then I went to Wardah.

Q.—Was the crop failure in 1896-97 as great?

A.—In the Wardah district there was an eight-anna crop.

Q.—You had your circle relief organization; and had you commenced charitable relief?

A.—Yes, we opened cheap grain shops in September.

Q.—Had you kitchens then?

A.—No, we had kitchens in the middle of October.

Q.—Did you open any test works?

A.—None.

Q.—When did you commence regular relief works?

A.—Two on the 28th of October and two on the 1st of November.

Q.—In the meantime gratuitous relief was going on?

A.—Yes, gratuitous relief was started in the middle of October; orders were received on the 10th of October.

Q.—In what shape was relief given?

A.—There was village relief in cash and one kitchen in every relief circle.

Q.—How many relief circles were there?

A.—Twenty-two.

Q.—Did you start cash relief in every village ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Who distributed the cash relief ?

A.—The *mukaddams*, who gave it weekly to the paupers.

Q.—Who prepared the list ?

A.—The *patwāris*, with the assistance of *mukaddams*.

Q.—Were the lists strictly restricted to the classes mentioned in the Famine Code ?

A.—After the first distribution, in November it was revised and checked by the superior officers. The orders were at first rather liberally interpreted and then a revised list was prepared.

Q.—That was in October ?

A.—The first distribution then took place: the revised list was made in November.

Q.—The people managed to get on very well in your district in October, November and December. Were there not many on relief ?

A.—No, not many ; they began to rise in January.

Q.—Did you ever go beyond one kitchen in a circle ?

A.—Yes ; later on.

Q.—When the numbers increased ?

A.—Yes, we had to curtail them in December and January.

Q.—The people would not leave their homes because the children were fed in kitchens ?

A.—We had to strike off the children of able-bodied persons and let them go to relief works.

Q.—You fed the children ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Although the people were able-bodied ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How did the able-bodied persons get on in the village ?

A.—They scraped grass together and collected fuel.

Q.—Then you put the children upon the gratuitous relief list and relieved these persons of their dependants ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—It did not occur to you that you might offer labour to their parents and let them earn wages ?

A.—We did that afterwards: we had to send them away because they were idling.

Q.—Where did you send them away to ?

A.—To the relief works that had been opened.

Q.—I understand you to say that the children were put on gratuitous relief not because they were emaciated, but because their parents had no means of supporting them ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—But notwithstanding that your gratuitous relief did not rise very high ?

A.—No, because we restricted it. The A list was restricted to those who were entitled to relief under the Code.

Q.—That is not excessive. Well, can you explain how it is that in your district with practically an entire failure of the crops, as you say, you had in March only 3·6 of your population on gratuitous relief, while in the same month Bhandara had nearly double that amount ?

A.—I think the people must have had some stocks on which to fall back.

Q.—Is there any special difference between Bhandara and Wardah ?

A.—Bhandara had been severely pressed in the last famine also, while we had practically escaped.

Q.—You began relief works in October ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—There were not many relief workers till January ?

A.—No.

Q.—How many works had you started ?

A.—Four.

Q.—Did you keep to four ?

A.—No, we increased them to ten.

Q.—What system did you start ?

A.—The intermediate system. Payment by results.

Q.—Did you establish kitchens on your works ?

A.—Yes ; everywhere : branch kitchens too.

Q.—Were dependants fed as well as children ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you give no cash doles ?

A.—No.

Q.—Did you find people come to works that were not in want of relief ?

A.—A very small percentage. The people had not had a famine before. This was the first famine for a long time and they had some self-respect. At first they refused to take even gratuitous relief. They did not like to be called *kungāls*.

Q.—Did you organize small relief committees in the villages ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In every village there was a small committee composed of whom ?

A.—The *mukaddam* and one or two of the intelligent and influential men of the village.

Q.—Did you allow them to distribute doles of cash or grain in the village?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In addition to the kitchens?

A.—Only cash doles were given in addition to kitchens.

Q.—If you had to do the thing over again, would you prefer kitchens to grain doles?

A.—Yes, I think kitchens are better.

Q.—Do you think village committees can be trusted to do the work?

A.—It would be difficult in every village. We could do it of course wherever there was an intelligent *mukaddam*.

Q.—Did your village *mukaddam* or headman ever attempt to cheat in the gratuitous relief distribution?

A.—A very small percentage: perhaps one or two did.

Q.—Do you think they were inclined to be profuse in the distribution of relief?

A.—Yes; there was that tendency.

Q.—The health of the people was generally good in your district up till April?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was the daily task usually performed?

A.—Yes; at the beginning there were fines; but after the people got used to it, they did the work without much difficulty.

Q.—Was your agency mostly native or European?

A.—There was a European Famine Superintendent throughout and a European charge officer for two months only. All the rest were natives.

Q.—Were the men all natives of the Central Provinces?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And were you entirely satisfied with the way they worked?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How did you get the staff together. Was there a list of applicants prepared?

A.—No. It was kept in the Commissioner's office. The Deputy Commissioner sent names of men who were available in the district.

Q.—As a rule did you get men of your own district?

A.—No.

Q.—What was the salary that they drew as a rule?

A.—The officers in charge got from Rs. 100 to Rs. 150, and received increments of Rs. 10. The charge officers got from Rs. 100 to Rs. 180. The circle officers were all my own men, taken from the *patwāris*.

Mr. Bourdillon.—(After quoting the figures for May, June, and July said) that looks as if the whole of the people had gone to gratuitous relief. If gratuitous relief had not been available they would have died?

A.—Yes.

Q.—But they would have become emaciated on account of privation?

A.—Yes, as no work was available till the beginning of August.

Q.—Some suspicion seems to have crossed your mind at that time, as I find that the numbers on gratuitous relief fell in the month?

A.—We weeded them out.

Q.—You turned them off altogether?

A.—We did it gradually. We had none of the labouring classes on the B list.

Q.—You think it was necessary to keep them going that month?

A.—Yes.

Mr. Nicholson.—Are the sowings of the current year up to the average?

A.—Yes; I think they are a little in excess.

Q.—Was there any difficulty in getting seed?

A.—There was difficulty. We gave *takāvi*, and the tenants could thus procure enough seed.

Q.—It was useful?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was it given on a system of joint responsibility?

A.—Yes.

The President.—How do you explain the large increase in the total number in receipt of relief in June? Is it explicable on this ground that you opened your kitchens and that the kitchens were free to anybody who cared to come?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And that consequently a number of people came who had previously not been on relief at all?

A.—Yes, a certain percentage.

Q.—And the result of opening kitchens so freely was to bring in persons who did not want relief at all?

A.—Yes; there must have been a small percentage of such persons certainly.

Q.—How many do you think? Was it up to 10 or 20 per cent.?

A.—About 10 per cent.

Q.—Did this free distribution of gratuitous relief interfere, do you think, with the self-respect of the people?

A.—Only the poor people came.

Q.—We have it in evidence that other people came too?

A.—Very few came in the Wardah district.

Q.—What is your opinion with regard to the people who came for relief in kitchens? Would you say that it is an indication of the forfeiture of self-respect on the part of those people?

A.—Yes; I should think so.

Q.—What is the popular belief among yourselves, among the gentry of the Central Provinces? Do you think that the distribution of gratuitous relief has had any demoralizing effect?

A.—I don't think so.

Q.—Have the people shown any unwillingness to return to their ordinary avocations?

A.—Yes, there was a little unwillingness at first. They wanted proper wages.

Q.—They wanted, I suppose, from employers of labour the same amount as they received from Government?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In ordinary times do not agricultural labourers get for tilling the field more than the Government wages?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And if they returned to their fields would they not have got the ordinary wage?

A.—They would have got from four to six pice, but that was not enough for their subsistence owing to the high prices of food-grains.

Witness went on to explain that the ground had received a sort of preparatory digging up and that the usual amount of labour was not required for it.

Q.—To what do you attribute the great increase in mortality in May?

A.—To cholera: it began in April.

Q.—How did it begin?

A.—It was due to the bad water-supply.

Q.—Did you take any precautions in regard to the water upon your relief works?

A.—We had the wells guarded and put in permanganate of potash every day during the cholera season.

Q.—Did you choose your relief works with reference to the water-supply?

A.—Yes; we had to do that.

Q.—Did you dig wells?

A.—Yes; in every camp. We could not depend upon the old wells.

Q.—Did you carry out village works by advances made to *mālguzārs*?

A.—Yes; sixteen altogether.

Q.—Were they recoverable advances?

A.—No.

Q.—Is the level of the water low in this district?

A.—It is about 50 feet.

Q.—Are these wells used for irrigation?

A.—In some places.

Q.—There was a very high death-rate in some months. In August it was 10·68 and 12·79 in September. Were they all due to cholera?

A.—No; but a percentage was: some were due to bowel complaints.

Q.—Is there any truth in the complaints that the food in kitchens was indigestible?

A.—No; but the rice was not suited to the systems of the people. It was Bengal *usna* rice. There was no *juār* available.

Q.—Were there large importations of Bengal rice?

A.—Yes; the Bengal rice saved the people.

Q.—Was there any difficulty in regard to Railway transport?

A.—No; none.

Q.—On large works did you ever find that there were complaints of unusual immorality?

A.—None; I made particular inquiries.

Q.—Used the people to keep to village groups?

A.—Yes, and the gangs were formed in that manner.

Q.—What was the effect of village relief works?

A.—They were very useful to the cultivators at the time when they were required in their villages; but there is no scope for any extension.

Q.—If you had, as you say, a crop failure of such magnitude the people must be very substantially well off to have got on as they did?

A.—Yes; some are.

Q.—Are they getting richer or poorer?

A.—They are in a normal condition.

Q.—What is the rate of rent?

A.—It is about Re. 1 per acre.

Q.—What is the cultivated area of your district?

A.—781,923 acres is the total cropped area.

Q.—What is the usual crop?

A.—Cotton, *juār*, linseed, and wheat.

Q.—Which is the most extensive?

A.—Cotton and *juār*.

Q.—What proportion does cotton cover?

A.—*Juār* is 35 per cent. and cotton 36 per cent. of the *bhaif* area.

Q.—What is supposed to be a fair value of an acre of cotton? What does the tenant get?

A.—It depends upon different circumstances. I think Rs. 70 to Rs. 80 per acre is a fair valuation for good land, but taking good and bad together, the average is only Rs. 30 per acre.

Q.—What is the value of an acre of *juár* ?  
A.—About Rs. 25.  
Q.—How many maunds can you get from an acre of *juár* ?  
A.—750 pounds.  
Q.—About 10 maunds ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—What does it sell at per acre ?  
A.—It sells at about Rs. 7 to Rs. 8 a *khandi*.  
Q.—About Rs. 15 ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Are there any bye-products ?  
A.—*Juár-karbi*.  
Q.—What is the value of an acre of *juár-karbi* ?  
A.—Rs. 5.  
Q.—Are there any other bye-products ?  
A.—Tur and Mug.  
Q.—So you think an acre of *juár* would give from Rs. 20 to Rs. 25 ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Will that represent the average produce of your district now ?  
A.—I should think so.  
Q.—The rent, then, per acre is infinitesimally small ?  
A.—It is not heavy, except in the Hinganghat tahsil.  
Q.—Do people pay more for wheat than for cotton ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Does the *mālguzár* for land sown with wheat get more or less than Re. 1 ?  
A.—More, but it varies.  
Q.—What for land sown with cotton ?  
A.—10 per cent. lower than wheat.  
Q.—What would be given for an acre of land sown with cotton ?  
A.—I have no experience, and cannot say.  
Q.—What is it generally supposed to be. Will it be more than Rs. 2 ?  
A.—About that I think.  
Q.—Will *juár* land pay more than Re. 1 ?  
A.—About Re. 1.  
Q.—The profits which the cultivator makes must be very large ?  
A.—In some places they are.  
Q.—What proportion of the Rs. 2 for cotton land and Re. 1 for *juár* land does Government take as revenue ?  
A.—59 per cent. of the total assets.  
Q.—Having regard to that statement, do you consider that the incidence of the Government revenue on the *rayat* has had any effect in weakening the power of the people to resist famine ?  
A.—No ; I don't think so.  
Q.—Is there any other circumstance which has had any effect in making your district less able to resist famine ?  
A.—Yes, the failure of the crops.  
Q.—Do you think there is anything of a permanent nature which has made your district more open to the ravages of famine than before ?  
A.—No.  
Q.—Is indebtedness among the people increasing ?  
A.—Yes, the famine has increased that, but it existed before that.  
Q.—From whom do the people get their advances ?  
A.—From *sowkars* and *Márváriś*.  
Q.—What is the average rate of interest ?  
A.—12 or 18 per cent. per annum and it goes up to 24 per cent.  
Q.—Is there any feeling or desire to get money on easier terms ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Is there any combination with that object ?  
A.—No ; but people would like to have it.  
Q.—Are they beginning to talk of it ?  
A.—Not the poor cultivators.  
Q.—Are the more intelligent people beginning to talk of it ?  
A.—I don't think so.  
Q.—Is there anything you can suggest to improve the condition of your district and the position of the people ?  
A.—If their old debts were wiped off, it would be good.  
Q.—Do you think the *sowkár* would welcome any measure of that sort ?  
A.—No, I don't think so.  
Q.—Have you seen what Mr. Fuller has been doing in the Jubbulpore Division. Would that be useful ?  
A.—Yes ; but if old debts are not wiped out, it would be of no use.  
Q.—Has it become more difficult for the people to get money since the new law came into force ?  
A.—We have not yet had enough time to judge of its effects.

Q.—Do you think your people are as substantial as those of Bhandara or the Balaghát people?

A.—They are more substantial than the Balaghát people.

Mr. Bourdillon.—The last witness said that the month of July was a very wet month in Chanda. Was that the case in Wardah also?

A.—The rains started late.

Q.—Practically very little work was done?

A.—Yes.

Mr. Nicholson.—As a matter of fact, the cultivators did not come on to relief?

A.—Some of them did; but a small percentage.

Q.—Petty cultivators?

A.—Yes.

S 13

Answers by S. M. CHITNAVIS, Esq., U. C. S., Deputy Commissioner, Wardha,  
to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

Q. 1.—The outturn of crops was fairly good in 1895-96. The yield of 1896-97 was no worse than poor, and the district practically escaped famine, and though prices rose very high no measures of relief, to speak of, were required. The kharif of 1897-98 was a bumper one, and rabi fairly good. The kharif of 1898-99 was fairly good and rabi bad throughout the district.

The Hinganghat tahsil, in which rabi is an important crop, fared badly during the period referred to above. With the single exception of 1897-98, when a short area was sown, it did not get a good rabi crop for some six years. The kharif of 1898-99 was inferior to that of the other two tahsils.

The following table compares the cropped areas of the four years previous to the rainy season of 1899, and exhibits the outturn and produce during the same period:—

Year.				Cropped area percentage of normal. The area of 1893-94 = 100 normal.	Outturn. (100-normal).	Proportion of produce to normal. $\frac{\text{Col. 2} \times \text{Col. 3}}{100}$
1895-96	...	...	..	94	95	89
1896-97	...	...	...	92	59	54
1897-98	...	...	...	99	110	109
1898-99	...	...	...	97	66	64

In 1897-98 it was discovered that in a few villages of the Hinganghat tahsil cropping had fallen off to such an extent since revision of Settlement as to justify interference. Remission of revenue aggregating Rs. 3,111-12-0 was accordingly sanctioned, the term of concession varying from 2 to 5 years. In 1898-99, the following remissions were granted, in accordance with the terms of the Chief Commissioner's Resolution No. 1462, dated the 10th April 1899:—

	Rs.
Wardha tahsil	... 417
Hinganghat tahsil	... 6,542 (over and above Rs. 3,111-12-0 sanctioned previously).
Arvi tahsil	... 329

In Hinganghat revenue to the extent of Rs. 19,731-8-0 was suspended.

Q. 2.—The kharif sowings of 1899 were in excess of the normal, as under—

Wardha	...	...	...	24 per cent.
Hinganghat	...	...	...	51 "
Arvi	...	...	...	13 "

The area of 1893-94, *i. e.*, of the year of attestation preliminary to revision of Settlement, has been assumed as the normal.

Q. 3 (a).—40 inches; (b) 12·81 inches or about 32 per cent. of the average; (c) 13 inches September; (d) as shown below:—

Month.				Rainfall in 1899.	Average rainfall.
June	...	...	...	2'35	9 68
July	...	...	...	1'24	10 83
August	...	...	...	5'41	10'28
September	...	...	...	3 81	5'86

Q. 4.—34 per cent.

Q. 5 (a).—10 per cent.; (b) 44 per cent.

Q. 6.—The necessity of relief was assumed from the fact of crop failure, which was so complete as to leave no doubt as to the necessity.

Q. 7.—Total failure of kharif crops over three-fourths of the district; entire failure of rabi throughout the district; utter lack of agricultural employment for the labouring classes; starting of a brisk export trade with Bombay, Khandesh and Guzarat; sudden rise in prices to famine limits; dismissal of farm servants by agriculturists; inability of tenants to get advances from sowcars; occurrence of grain loots and increase in petty crime; upward tendency shown by mortality; increase in number of beggars and stray cases of emaciation.

Q. 8.—Government forests (203 square miles), with the exception of a few coppiced compartments (these were opened at a subsequent stage), were thrown open to free grazing and to free extraction of bullock and head-loads of grass and dry wood for fuel.

The district was divided into 22 relief circles and two Charge Officers (including the Tahsildar) were appointed to each tahsil. This was done in August.

Sanction to actual distribution of village relief being started in certain circles was asked for on 27th September, and on 3rd October the relief was proposed to be extended to the whole district. Cheap grain shops were in the meantime started at various centres. Advances were given to Relief Officers for relief of urgent cases, and to Police for relief of starving wanderers. Distribution of village relief was commenced by the middle of October and completed by the end of that month. One kitchen was started in each relief circle. Pending the starting of large public works a few village works were started as a stop-gap.

Q. 9 (a).—Yes: (b) Yes.

Q. 10.—Large public works. A programme of village works was prepared within a fortnight of completion of the circle organization. The programme was ready by 15th September.

Q. 11.—(1) Opening of Government forests.

(2) Organisation of private charity.

(3) Kitchens and village cash relief.

No test-works were undertaken or poor-houses started.

Q. 12.—The circle organisation was completed before the close of August. Two Charge Officers (including Tahsildars) were appointed to each tahsil at the same time. In October an additional Charge Officer was appointed to each tahsil. On 1st November an Assistant Commissioner joined the district as Famine Assistant, and in December a Staff Corps Officer was posted as Charge Officer, and he and the Assistant Commissioner had the overlook of half the district each. The Circle Officer visited each village in his circle once in 10 days, the Charge Officer ordinarily once a month, and the superior officers, who were constantly on tour, as frequently as they could.

Q. 13.—Yes. To the extent of Rs. 22,117, under the Land Improvement Loans Act, on ordinary terms, and Rs. 1,730 on terms mentioned in paragraph 4 of Central Provinces Secretariat Circular letter No. F-39, dated the 10th January 1900. The latter were given for the improvement of water-supply, and the former mainly for that purpose.

Q. 14.—Yes. 35 feet. Digging of wells was encouraged by loans, and they were successful as (b) and (c), 15 to 18; no test-works were undertaken.

Q. 19.—Large public works. A few small works were opened for a week or so as a stop-gap.

Q. 20.—An European Officer, styled the Famine Works Superintendent, subject of course to the Deputy Commissioner's power of control of all points affecting the efficiency of relief. Yes. None to speak of.

Q. 21.—Yes. 5,000 or at the most 6,000 workers. Yes. Additional charges were opened.



Q. 22.—Yes. The establishment paid by the month consisted of:—

1 Officer-in-charge

1 Clerk, with an assistant.

1 Cashier.

Work-agents, according to the number of people on work.

1 Gang muharrir to every 15 gangs.

1 Tools muharrir.

2 Kitchen muharrir.

1 Cook for hospital; cooks in kitchen, according to the number fed.

1 Hospital Assistant.

1 Compounder.

Sweepers according to requirements. Water-guards, conservancy-guards, hospital warders, &c., were paid by the day.

The arrangements for hutting, &c., were made in accordance with the instructions contained in G. O. No. 287—7630-F. (Public Works Department), dated the 20th September 1899.

Q. 23.—Admission was free to all persons ready to submit to the labour-test. No distance-test was insisted on, and residence on the works was not compulsory.

Q. 24.—Area 400 square miles. Population 60 to 80,000, some had come about 40 miles.

Q. 25.—They were bound to accept the decision of the Deputy Commissioner (pending reference to superior authority if necessary) in all matters which were not of a professional nature. If his orders were questioned as contravening departmental orders, a reference was made to the Commissioner, whose orders were final, subject to a reference to the Chief Commissioner, if thought necessary. The Deputy Commissioner of course exercised his control through the Executive Engineer, unless the case was such as to call for immediate action.

Q. 26.—Yes. From a list of candidates maintained by the Commissioner. Some were Naib-Tahsildars or clerks taken from the several offices, and others were selected from land-holding families. Rupees, rising by monthly increments of Rs. 10 to a maximum of Rs. 150. The increments were strictly conditional on good work, and were not given unless the official did really well. He was subordinate to the local representative of the Public Works Department. Yes.

Q. 27.—Yes.

Q. 28.—Gangs working under the intermediate system consisted of 20 to 30 workers, and those under the task-work system of 90. Arrangements were made to secure village or family gangs, so far as possible, and with good success.

Q. 29.—That given in paragraphs 21 and 22 of the G. O. referred to in answer to question 22, as amended by Circular letter No. F-41, dated the 22nd January 1900.

Wage scale was:—

Special	{ (a) ... 2 pice more than a digger.
	{ (b) ... 1 do. do.
Class I	... 19 chittaks of grain.
" II	... 15 do. do.
" III	... 8 do. do.

Persons above 14 years of age were classed as adults, and children between 8 and 14 years old were included in Class III. Class I were allowed 19 instead of 20 chittaks.

The variations effected were more economical.

Q. 30.—Women should be included in Class II, and there should be no sexual distinction in that class. None. The classification followed had the great merit of simplicity, and was on the whole economical.

Q. 31.—On all works, infirm gangs were maintained on the task-work system, and others on the intermediate system.

Q. 32.—If started in time, relief can be adequately afforded in cases of severe famine by work conducted throughout on a system of payment-by-results.

Q. 33.—According to the table of standard tasks appended to Circular letter No. F-13, dated the 29th August 1899. It was graduated to the class of works. During the hot season tasks were reduced 25 per cent., owing to the great severity of the weather. They were again raised on the monsoon setting in. Nursing mothers were allotted half the task of their class.

Q. 34.—Adequate: kept the people in fairly good condition. Families with 3 or more members could make some saving. Copper coin returned freely to the Banias on the works. Officers-in-charge generally obtained their requirements from them and indented for very little on the treasury.

Q. 35.—Yes. If the price basis of wages is properly fixed, the workers cannot ordinarily save for their support on the rest day. Once the existence of severe distress is proved, a rest day wage should be allowed.

Q. 36 and 37.—I do not think it is high. There was no minimum wage under the intermediate system followed. Gangs were paid in proportion to the work done.

Q. 38.—Daily. Daily payment is desirable.

Q. 39.—Throughout daily. Yes.

Q. 40.—To the headman of the gang. Under the system followed of forming family or village gangs there was no harm in making payment to the headman. This is more convenient.

Q. 41.—Statistics not available in my office.

Q. 42.—Yes.

Q. 43.—As shown in answer to question 29. Children 8 to 14 years old were included in Class III and made to work. Those under 8 were fed in the kitchen. For babes-in-arms an extra pice was given to the mothers. When the mother was fed at a kitchen the lowest cooked ration was substituted for the pice payment given on account of the infant.

Infirm gangs were attached to each work on the task-work system. This is preferable.

Q. 45.—Gang registers were kept up in the form appended to Public Works Secretariat Circular No. F-7, dated the 22nd March 1900.

Q. 46.—Deputy Commissioner, subject to approval by the Commissioner. The cheapest food-grain available. Yes.

Q. 48.—The Deputy Commissioner and the Commissioner.

Q. 51.—People were drafted to "local works annexés" without any difficulty.

Q. 52.—These were undertaken for a short time as a stop-gap until large public works were opened; during the hot-weather months, to give employment to agriculturists in the near neighbourhood of their villages, a few were done as "local works annexés," with a view to relieve the pressure on, and to economize, large works.

Q. 53.—Tanks and reservoirs for storage of water, wells and improvement of village-sites.

Q. 54.—"Local works annexés" were conducted under the supervision of the Public Works Department, and others under that of the Civil agency through landholders.

Q. 55.—A plan and estimate of cost was prepared by the District Fund Overseer of the tahsil prior to the starting of the work. The area to be excavated was marked out by him and the work to be done explained to the malguzar in charge. The work was conducted on the *pasoree* system, to which malguzars and people are accustomed. The area to be excavated was marked into *pasoree* squares, a *pasoree* being  $5 \times 5 \times 1$  "haths." Gangs consisted of a digger and two or three carriers. A literate mate was allowed on Rs. 6 a month to keep the register of attendance and record of measurement. A

Committee of the leading residents of the village was appointed to assist the malguzar in the supervision. They visited the work in turn morning and evening, assigned to the gangs their squares, got the work done measured in their presence, and saw that it was properly done. The malguzar was given an advance and paid the wages daily in accordance with the measurement. The people were paid at so many *pasorees* for a rupee, and knew exactly what they were entitled to. The Overseer and the Charge Officer visited the work periodically and checked the work and payments.

Q. 56.—The scale of wages was one pice lower than that prevalent on the nearest Public Works Department work. The standard tasks prescribed for these works were reduced to *pasorees* and varied as expedient. Employment was given to agriculturists and their dependants principally until the monsoon broke. Thereafter other people were admitted for the finishing off, on tickets given by Circle Officers.

Q. 57.—As stated above.

Q. 58.—Village works conducted under the supervision of the Civil agency were small ones, employing at the most 300 to 400 persons. They were confined chiefly to cultivators and so they did not draw labourers from the large works or *vice versa*. On "local works annexés" workers were drafted from the main work, and comprised people who had been on the work for some considerable time past and had thus satisfied the test of distress.

Q. 59.—Wherever there is scope for them, it seems to me desirable to extend small village relief works. They are, in the first place, if properly executed of greater usefulness as compared with much of the road-work which perforce has to be undertaken to afford employment for famine labour. Secondly, they are better suited and needed for the relief of people, who though poor and accustomed to labour in their own fields, belong to a much higher stratum of society than ordinary labourers, and to whose feelings, especially to those of their womenkind, life at ordinary relief-works is repugnant. They are further necessary for the relief of agriculturists at a time when they are required in their villages for the resumption of agricultural operations.

Q. 60.—None. The Gonds are semi-hinduized and fairly civilized. None. Yes.

Q. 61.—None.

Q. 62.—Relief was given to poorer tenants and their wives in return for work done by them in their own fields. This was started in August and closed at the end of October. The number of tenants to be relieved was limited to an absolute maximum of 10 per cent. of the tenants in each circle. The maximum number of tenants relieved in any one week was 2,555, or 5 per cent. of the total number of tenants in the district.

Q. 63.—None.

Q. 64.—At first they did. They were not physically unfit for ordinary labour, but were not accustomed to it.

Q. 66 and 67.—In August 1899, the Government forests (203 square miles), with the exception of a few coppiced compartments, were thrown open to free grazing and to free extraction of head and bullock loads of grass. In October the coppiced compartments were also thrown open. The supply of grass in the forests was soon exhausted and all surplus cattle had in consequence to be sent out of the district. For the use of the plough-cattle compressed grass was imported from Warora (the produce of the Chanda forests) of the weight of 2,220 tons 23 maunds 7 seers, stacked at Wardha and Pulgaon, and sold at Rs. 12 and Rs. 13 a ton respectively: 286 tons 18 maunds 23 seers out of this were, at the instance of the District Charitable Fund Committee, given away in charity, on tickets issued by Charge Officers. On this stock being exhausted, baled grass was imported from Raj-Nandgaon, loose grass from Tirora, and karbi from Warora by private agency.

Q. 68.—(a) and (b), with cooked food.

Q. 69.—Kitchen relief, being a much better form of relief than payment in cash. Relief given in cash is liable to be wasted and there is no certainty as to the recipient taking full advantage of it. A marked difference is noticeable between the condition of those relieved by cooked food and those in cash, the former being in much better condition than the latter, especially children.

Q. 70.—The recipients of gratuitous relief were selected by Circle and Charge Officers in consultation with the mukaddam and other residents of the village.

Q. 71.—None.

Q. 74.—(a) 121 ; (b) 152. Ordinarily a radius of 3 miles, except in thickly populated tracts, and during the rains, when a much smaller radius is needed.

Q. 75.—Kichri of rice and dal or crushed juari and dal, on the following scale :—

				Uncooked food.	
Adults (over 14)	...	...	...	9	chittaks.
Children 10 to 14	...	...	...	7½	do.
Do. 7 to 10	...	...	...	6	do.
Do. 4 to 7	...	...	...	4½	do.
Do. Up to 4	...	...	...	3	do.
<i>Condiments—</i>					
Salt	...	...	...	24	chittaks.
Chillies	...	...	...	5	do.
Oil	...	...	...	8	do.
Haldi	...	...	...	2	do.

} per 100 persons.

Onions—half per head ; green vegetables when procurable.

Two meals—in the morning between 10 and 11 o'clock and in the evening between 5 and 6 o'clock. People were compelled to feed on the premises, excepting when it rained heavily and the sheds did not provide sufficient accommodation.

Q. 76.—None.

Q. 77.—Restricted until the rains set in. It was then free until weeding work started. When restricted, admission was by means of tickets given by Circle Officers, and those persons who were entitled to gratuitous relief under the rules only were admitted.

Q. 75. <sup>A</sup>The patwari in consultation with the mukaddam. By the Circle and Charge Officers : once a week by the mukaddam, once in 10 days by the Circle Officer, once a month by the Charge Officer, and periodically by Superior Officers.

Q. 76. <sup>A</sup>(a) In cash ; (b) weekly ; (c) at the malguzari chavdhi, unless the recipient was sick or unable to move.

Q. 77. <sup>A</sup>To a few able-bodied persons, under Rules 23 to 25 of the rules for village relief, appended to Central Provinces Secretariat Circular letter No. F-3, dated the 14th August 1899, for a few days, at the instance of the Civil Surgeon. During the rains in kitchens to able-bodied persons until weeding work started.

Q. 78.—Of the highest caste procurable, in the village or neighbourhood, generally Kunbis. By the people generally at the commencement ; by the higher classes throughout.

Q. 79.—The mukaddam of the village, assisted by the schoolmaster, or a muharrir where no schools existed. The Circle and Charge Officers visited them frequently, and other officers as often as they could.

Q. 80.—Yes. For people who were not in receipt of relief in any form except clothing, and whose total income, distributed over the members of the family depending on them for support, yielded an income of Re. 1-8-0 per head per month or less. The quantity of grain which a person was permitted to buy in the course of a month was limited to—

(a) For every member of his family above the age of 12 years, worth Rs. 2 :

(b) For every member of his family under 12 years, worth Re. 1-8-0 :

provided that no person could buy grain in a month exceeding in aggregate the quantity available for Rs. 12.

This form of relief was very successful. The cost to the Charitable Fund amounted to Rs. 6,000.

Q. 81.—No. They kept the prices at a reasonable level.

Q. 82.—Suspensions Rs. 4,90,459 out of a total demand of Rs. 6,40,877 or 77 per cent. Remissions not yet sanctioned.

Q. 83.—On crop failure many proposals were framed in accordance with instructions contained in Famine Circular No. F-44, dated the 26th February 1900.

Q. 84.—The percentage of revenue to be collected was fixed by Tahsildar before collection of revenue began. Detailed proposals were submitted subsequently.

Q. 85.—Myself and my assistants decided what cultivators should receive suspensions in villages where only part of the revenue was suspended.

Q. 86.—None.

Q. 87.—Total failure of food crops and severe distress in consequence, inability of tenants and labourers to get the customary advances from their sowcars, utter unwillingness on the part of sowcars to advance money, total failure of the mahua crop, and lateness of the monsoon.

Q. 88.—It was neither.

Q. 89.—Labourers and petty cultivators; a few proprietors were on charitable relief; a very small percentage of tenants with security of tenure were on Government relief.

Q. 90.—This has been the first famine in this district of recent years.

Q. 91.—There was contraction of private credit to an appreciable extent. None, so far as I could gather.

Q. 92.—I think so.

Q. 94.—Weekly reports of births and deaths are made by kotwars at the police posts. In the case of cholera and such other epidemics reports are made daily.

Q. 95.—The high mortality was to a very large extent due to use of unsuitable food. A large portion of the dysentery and diarrhoea that prevailed in the district was due to use of Bengal rice, which was unsuited as an article of diet for the juar-eating people of the district. No deaths due to privation or diseases accelerated by privation were discovered.

Q. 96.—Impure and insufficient water-supply also played a very important part in the matter of increased mortality. Existing wells were periodically deepened, by blasting where necessary; new wells were sunk, and the sources of water-supply were permanganated as often as practicable.

Q. 97.—(a) All sources from which the water-supply was drawn were guarded, permanganated weekly (and in the cholera season every other day), flags were put up marking the limits within which the people could not attend calls of nature, guards were posted along the line to see that the sanitary rules were not infringed, and special precautions were taken during the cholera season to prevent a spread of the disease.

(b) One well in the village was taken possession of for the kitchen, permanganated periodically, and the water of that well only was used for both cooking and drinking purposes. The well was guarded and nobody but the person in charge was permitted to draw water therefrom.

The Hospital Assistant attached to the work supervised the sanitary arrangement there. The arrangements were further supervised by the Civil Surgeon and the Inspecting Medical Officer (specially appointed for the purpose). The arrangements at kitchens were supervised by Circle and Charge Officers, the Civil Surgeon, the Famine Assistants and by the Kitchen Inspectors appointed during the rains.

Q. 98.—Yes.

Q. 99.—Until the rains set in none were available. During the rains wild vegetables were used to a certain extent.

Q. 102.—Made over to friends, relations and caste people.

Q. 103.—None.

Q. 104.—None.

Q. 104 (a).—Weekly reports were received from the railway stations in the district. Fairly 30 per cent.

Q. 105.—None until the weeding season approached. Able-bodied persons feeding in kitchens were then excluded therefrom.

Q. 106.—Cotton and juar are being substituted for rabi.

Q. 107.—Yes. No. To a certain extent.

Q. 109.—Two. None.

Q. 110.—As far as was practicable. Yes.

Q. 111.—Not appreciably.

WARDHA; }  
The 4th January 1901. }

S. M. CHITNAVIS,  
Deputy Commissioner.

## CAPTAIN J. P. BLAKEWAY, R.E., EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, BHANDARA.

*The President.*—How long have you been in this province?

*A.*—About a year and-a-half.

*Q.*—What was the first thing you heard about the famine preparations?

*A.*—First I heard that there was a committee in Nágpur in August. After that I received orders in September to be prepared to open four camps in Bhandara and six in Balaghát.

*Q.*—You worked according to the Famine Code?

*A.*—According to the general orders. The system here is practically the same as in the North-West, the intermediate system.

*Q.*—Did you provide your own staff for each charge?

*A.*—Yes; as far as possible. In the beginning we were able to get our own staff; but subsequently there was very great difficulty in getting a staff.

*Q.*—What was the staff?

*A.*—An officer in charge, who was supplied by the Commissioner of the Division.

*Q.*—He was a Civil officer?

*A.*—Yes; then there were work agents. One clerk to act as sub-cashier and one clerk to keep accounts in English, and one Hospital Assistant also.

*Q.*—For each camp?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Did you do anything in the way of advertising for suitable officers to fill these posts?

*A.*—I advertised for work agents and I wrote to Roorkee.

*Q.*—Do you know whether there was a system of keeping a general list of persons suitable to work as agents?

*A.*—I do not know.

*Q.*—You were able to provide yourself with this establishment for each of your 10 camps?

*A.*—Yes; but subsequently we found it difficult to do so as the number of camps became increased.

*Q.*—So that the result was that you had a smaller establishment to deal with a very much increased number of camps?

*A.*—Smaller establishment of work agents only.

*Q.*—What was the result?

*A.*—The result was the engagement of tindals, who were not capable of doing the work at first; they had to learn to measure up the work.

*Q.*—The work agents organized gangs and marked out work?

*A.*—They marked out work and measured work; but the Civil officer in charge organized gangs.

*Q.*—Give me a sketch of the organization of a gang; what did they do at first?

*A.*—When a camp opened the Sub-Divisional Officer and Famine Superintendent had to see whether all the materials had been sent up; then the staff was instructed as regards its duties; and subsequently organized gangs as famine labour arrived.

*Q.*—Had these gangs a nominal roll?

*A.*—No; we made payment to the mates of the gangs; at the same time we called the coolies and told them what they had earned.

*Q.*—Having organized, say, 5,000 or 6,000 people in a gang, was the task marked out which each man had to perform on a particular day?

*A.*—It was marked out on road work, and on metal work for each gang. The mate of the gang got so accustomed to the work, that each one provided himself with a stick three feet long; for he knew exactly what task must be done.

*Q.*—In marking out, say, road-making, they marked out a certain number of feet long, a certain number of feet wide, and a certain number of feet deep.

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—What was their task?

*A.*—It varied; we started with 70 cubic feet; then 80 cubic feet, which gradually was increased to 100 cubic feet.

*Q.*—That was done by a digger and two carriers?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—One digger had always two carriers?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Your measurement at the end of the day would be cumulative measurement for the gang?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—So that if a particular digger and his attached carriers had done their work, while other diggers and other carriers had not done their work, the whole gang would suffer?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Did you not modify that system of measurement?

*A.*—It was absolutely impossible without a much larger staff: a staff like that employed could not have done it.

Q.—When the numbers increased very greatly and you came up to 59,000, how did you manage to meet the strain?

A.—The camps were increased at Bhandara and Balaghát.

Q.—You said that you did not get competent work agents for all these camps?

A.—We got them finally, there was difficulty in getting them at an early period.

Q.—Was there any difficulty in regard to payment?

A.—No.

Q.—Or in regard to measurement?

A.—No, we had to make one man do two men's work.

Q.—How did you deal with regard to fines?

A.—We had the intermediate system.

Q.—That is to say there was no fining?

A.—There was fining.

Q.—It was merely paying by result; if a person did not do full task he was fined?

A.—He was paid according to the work he had done.

Q.—What classes did not earn full wage?

A.—Every class.

Q.—What was the character of these people—I mean, were they agriculturists or people unaccustomed to this kind of work?

A.—I do not think so.

Q.—Why did they not earn full wage? Was it because they were unaccustomed to it?

A.—Simply because they did not want to earn full wage.

Q.—Your wage was calculated on the prices of grain?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The wage was a living wage?

A.—Living wage if they had nothing, if they were destitute.

Q.—They were not destitute?

A.—A certain number in all camps were not destitute.

Q.—What proportion of these was not destitute?

A.—I cannot say.

Q.—Roughly speaking, 10 or 20 per cent.?

A.—I should say, roughly, 10 per cent.

Q.—Would you say that the degree of fining was an indication of the fact that the people did not need to get relief?

A.—In one camp it was so. They told the Famine Superintendent that they wanted two or three pice for getting their luxuries.

Q.—In your opinion can any relation be established between the wages earned and the necessities of the people?

A.—Yes.

Q.—If in a particular camp less wages were earned, am I to assume that in that camp there were people who were in no need of relief?

A.—Not throughout, but in certain cases.

Q.—Roughly, that is an indication?

A.—Yes.

Q.—It has been stated here that when people come to the relief works, those who are not in the habit of working, cannot do full work because their hands are soft; do you not think that a certain number of people are fined for that reason?

A.—I do not think so.

Q.—What was the sort of earth you started with?

A.—Nearly all black soil.

Q.—Is it easier to work black soil than moorum?

A.—Yes, because it gets in clods. We reduced the task on moorum.

Q.—Who paid the wages?

A.—The officer in charge through his gang *muharrir*.

Q.—The officer in charge measured up?

A.—No. The work agent measured up; but the officer in charge paid money through the gang *muharrir*.

Q.—Had you any system of payment to individuals?

A.—We had that at first.

Q.—You did not find it work well?

A.—It worked at first, but afterwards it was found not of very much use. As a matter of fact the whole of the gang wanted the money to be handed over to the mate, by the gang *muharrir*, who signed a receipt for the amount.

Q.—Did you have occasion to change from the intermediate system to the Code task system?

A.—No.

Q.—Had you any complaints at all from the members of the gang individually of short payment?

A.—No. I have had a lot of complaints from a large number of men that it was not the task system. They wanted payment and no work.

Q.—Minimum wage?

A.—Yes.



Q.—In such a case as I have mentioned where because some men would not do full work the whole gang would be fined, had you any complaints from the men who had worked?

A.—No. I suppose it was a case of give-and-take in the gang, if anybody did not work on a particular day, the other body would not work the next day, and so there was no complaint at all.

Q.—You had weakly gangs?

A.—Yes, from the beginning.

Q.—Was there a minimum wage for them?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Your weakly gangs were on the task work system?

A.—Yes, at first; but finally they were put on the intermediate system because it was found that on the Code task system they did absolutely nothing, and under the intermediate system they could earn a better wage. Under the task system they practically had no work, and did no work because they knew they were entitled to the minimum wage.

Q.—Therefore you thought it better they should be engaged in some sort of work?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You abolished the weakly gangs?

A.—Yes, and put them on the intermediate system.

Q.—As a general rule or merely here and there?

A.—Only here and there.

Q.—Having put these weakly gangs on the intermediate system, they were still recorded as "weakly"?

A.—No, they were not recorded as weakly gangs, but were given lighter work—stacking metal.

Q.—They had sufficient food?

A.—Yes.

Q.—They got more than they needed?

A.—I do not think so.

Q.—Were the wages such as gave the people generally more food than was necessary?

A.—I think the wages were adequate for a single person; but for families, I think they were too high. A family consisting of one man, one woman, and two children, after doing full work could get Rs. 9 which is considerably more than what you pay the *chaukidars* and *pat-waris*. I also heard from the Deputy Commissioner that they were sending money to their villages. I heard this also from the Sub-Divisional officers.

Q.—19 *chhataks* were given to a digger, 15 to the carriers, and 8 for working children?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What arrangements were made on your works for food? Did you allow private traders to supply grain?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You did not find it necessary to do anything yourself?

A.—No.

Q.—Wherever you opened your works the *bania* appeared?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you give him some convenience in the way of hutting?

A.—Yes.

Q.—At any time were there cases of *looting* the *banias'* shops?

A.—No; none.

Q.—Had you a system of daily wages?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you not make arrangements for ascertaining the quality of grain sold on the relief works?

A.—No; I made arrangement for ascertaining the quality of grain for the kitchens.

Q.—As a rule did the people get their supplies elsewhere than on the works?

A.—It is rather hard to say; the simple reason was that nearly 80 per cent. of the people lived in their villages; they did not live on the works, and they naturally bought grain where they lived.

Q.—You did not make living on the works compulsory?

A.—No.

Q.—If you had made it compulsory, do you think many persons would have left the works?

A.—Yes, I do not think they would have liked to leave their homes.

Q.—What was the distance of the villages relieved by each work?

A.—The distance of the furthest village in Bhandara was 16 miles. In Balaghát it was 15 miles.

Q.—The average distance would be six or seven miles?

A.—Yes, they would walk five or six miles to work from their own villages.

Q.—To work and get home again?

A.—Yes. In the warm weather the men camp out and go home on Sunday, the rest day, taking their earnings and coming back again.

Q.—In May you transferred certain people from ordinary relief works to village relief?

A.—That was not in May. The circular came in May; but it was not really acted upon at all till the end of June.

Q.—There was a large number of people who left the relief works? What was the reason of the drop?

A.—The people going off to cultivate.

Q.—There was still a further drop in June?

A.—That was due to the people going off to cultivate too.

Q.—Do you think, having regard to the character of the people, if you had stiffened your task or reduced your wages with the object of sending people off to their villages, there would have been substantial risk?

A.—I think there would have been risk to the individual, and not to the families; a large proportion of those who were in camps were families.

Q.—Did it occur to you that it would be desirable to stiffen the task and reduce the wage in order to reduce the number of your camps?

A.—The tasks were stiffened throughout. The tasks were first arranged by the Deputy Commissioner in consultation with the Sub-Divisional Officer; while these tasks were in force the men used to leave at two o'clock after finishing their work.

Q.—They became more dexterous?

A.—Yes, so they became able to do more work; and the task was increased.

Q.—This went on to September?

A.—The camps were closed in October.

Mr. Nicholson.—What people came on the relief works: ordinary labouring classes or any special classes?

A.—A large proportion were of the ordinary labouring classes; some came from the agricultural class. We had a number of Kunbis.

Q.—They were used to this sort of work?

A.—The agricultural labouring classes were unaccustomed to metal-breaking.

Q.—Generally the people were of the labouring classes?

A.—I know of a case where a petty *malguzar* came to work and wanted to work as mate of a gang. But there were only a few cases of this kind.

Q.—From your experience in this famine, do you think that the intermediate system is fully capable of dealing with acute and intense famine?

A.—I certainly think so if the famine is taken in time.

Q.—Those persons who wanted to remain on task work or minimum wage would grumble when they got more work to do?

A.—In one camp I found that the coolies had done no work one day. That was when I raised the task. They were under the impression they were on task work with a minimum wage and expected to be paid for doing nothing.

Q.—They had previous experience?

A.—They all remembered the last famine.

Q.—Did you find that they were able to do their task work generally in short hours and go back to their homes fully five miles distant?

A.—I think so: you see they had to return quickly in cold weather.

Q.—The wage for the children was 8 *chhataks*. Did you find any deterioration?

A.—Yes. It was owing not to the low scale, but because the parents of the children appropriated the money given to them.

Q.—Is it a fact that the children were bound to get the full wage no matter what work they had done?

A.—Yes, that was in the circular.

Mr. Bourdillon.—The working children?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was the food sufficient for the non-working children?

A.—The kitchen ration made them as fat as butter.

The President.—What do you suggest? Do you suggest that working children should be fed in the kitchens?

A.—I think that would be very advisable.

Q.—Are you of opinion that 8 *chhataks* is a full wage, a sufficient wage for the working children?

A.—Yes, it is sufficient; but the money given to the children is appropriated by their parents.

Q.—The organization of gangs is done by the Public Works officer?

A.—Yes; it is done by the civil officer under the Public Works Department.

Q.—It is always done by them, and never by the people themselves in any way?

A.—No. The Sub-Divisional Officer is given instructions to select gangs as far as possible from one village and the people are supposed to choose their own mate. As a matter of fact getting a mate from the same village as the people was very hard, all through.

Q.—Do you think that 15 *chhataks* is too high a rate for an adult?

A.—No, I do not think that. For the individual, it is not too high; but for a member of a family it is too high.

Q.—Payments were made to individuals in your ordinary Public Works dealings?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you pay a woman as much as a man?

A.—No.

Q.—It is not the custom of the country to pay a woman as much as the man?

A.—No. A man gets Re. 0-2-6 and a woman gets Re. 0-1-6 in Balaghát.

Q.—Does the woman do as much work as a man?

A.—Except in digging, she does.

Q.—Was there any difficulty between the Public Works Department and the Civil Department with regard to the control of subordinates?

A.—No; not in the Bhandara district. There was a little trouble in the Balaghát district, but that was remedied by the circular of February.

Q.—The Deputy Commissioner said he was responsible for fixing the task?

A.—The Sub-Divisional Officer wrote the people left early at two o'clock, we therefore thought that the task was too small and ought to have been raised, but the Deputy Commissioner refused to raise it: then afterwards when I was ordered to be responsible for a full task being exacted, I raised the tasks all through. In order to keep the people in work a fair task was exacted.

Q.—The bigger question in dealing with scarcity is the question of task, that was for the Deputy Commissioner?

A.—Yes; it was formerly, but subsequently they made me responsible and I was bound to see that a fair task was done.

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EXTRACT FROM THE FURTHER EVIDENCE OF CAPTAIN J. P. BLAKE-  
WAY, R.E., EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, BHANDARA.

\* \* \* \* \*

I should like to say, as regards the rest-day wage, that I do not think it at all necessary. It was stopped in the Bhandara district in several camps, but the mortality did not increase. People remained just as well as before. In one camp it was never started, and there was no death in that camp.

Q.—Do you think that out of the 11 lakhs of wages spent in Bhandara you could take off about one lakh for the Sunday wage as being really gratuitous?

A.—Yes.

Mr. Nicholson.—In these provinces the maximum wage did not include an allowance to provide for dependants?

A.—No. Dependants were to be supported by the kitchens in the camps.



Q. 6.—Necessity for relief was assumed from the fact of crop failure.

Q. 9.—I was prepared to meet the famine.

(a) Famine programme was prepared. Surveys were not ready or estimates of cost.

(b) The relief programme included scale of establishment to meet any emergency, see General Order No. 287—7630-F., dated the 20th September 1899, with appendices. List of candidates qualified for famine service were not kept up by me, but were kept up by the Commissioner, Nagpur, see paragraph 14 of General Order.

Q. 10.—The relief programme contemplated large public works as the backbone of the relief system.

Q. 14.—Irrigation wells can be made practically throughout the two districts, with the exception of the hilly portions of the districts.

The average depth of water below the surface was about 15 feet except when sunk in the bed of a nala, where it was 5 feet.

Q. 19.—Large public works were first opened.

Q. 20.—They were under the control of the Superintending Engineer, Central Provinces, see General Order No. 287—7630-F., dated the 20th September 1899.

The scale of supervising establishment had been prescribed in advance, see General Order above quoted.

Establishment was ready.

There was no delay in opening works.

Tools and plant were available.

Q. 21.—Works were divided into charges. The maximum number of workers in a charge at first provided for was 6,000, see paragraph 4 of General Order.

This number was exceeded in several instances, and fresh charges were then opened or subsidiary charges, and workers were drafted under paragraph 8 of General Order.

Q. 22.—Each charge had its own establishment—

(a) Officer-in-charge.

(b) Work agents: one for 3,000 persons as originally sanctioned in paragraph 16 of General Order; two for more than 3,000 persons was sanctioned.

(c) One clerk to act as sub-cashier.

(d) Do. who can keep accounts in English.

(e) Disbursing gang muharrir for each 600 famine labourers.

(f) One tools muharrir.

(g) One kitchen muharrir. When subsidiary camp kitchens were started on the extension of the work, subsidiary kitchen muharrirs were employed.

(h) One Hospital Assistant and Compounder.

Arrangements had been prescribed beforehand for hutting the people as laid down in paragraph 105 of General Order.

Practically no hutting was required until the rains, as a large majority of the people lived in their villages: the few who lived on the works were provided with tatties to build chappars.

Water-tight huts were provided in the rains at specified camps ordered to be kept open, see paragraph 8-II of Famine Circular No. F-49.

Famine labourers nevertheless in the majority of cases did not use all the huts provided, but preferred to return at night to their villages.

Conservancy was carried out as laid down in paragraph 107 of General Order No. 287—7630-F. and Appendix III.

It was found that the scale laid down for sweepers was in excess of requirements owing to the majority of workers living in their villages, and the scale was reduced to six sweepers and one jamadar sweeper per charge.

Water-supply was carried out as laid down in paragraphs 100, 101 102, 103, and 104 of General Order No. 287—7630-F., dated the 20th September 1899.

Wells were always sunk near the staff quarters of a charge and subsequently along the work, as the work extended.

Arrangements were made to supply one piao to every three gangs of 30 persons, with a water distributor in charge of the piao.

Well guards were placed on all wells.

Water was carried from wells to piao in 100-gallon galvanized water-barrels on bullock-carts when the piao was at a distance of over one mile from well : when the piao was under one mile from well it was carried by water-carrier in kerosine-oil tins.

Food supply was under the Deputy Commissioner of the district, but there was no trouble as Bantias were only too anxious to supply Public Works Department camps and kitchens with grain.

For medical conveniences and supervision a hospital for males and one for females, with a dispensary and cholera sheds, was built before each charge opened. A Hospital Assistant and a Compounder were posted to each charge by Administrative Medical Officer.

Medicines, surgical instruments, &c., were provided, as ordered in Appendix XXIII of General Order No 287—7630-F., for each charge.

Q. 23.—Admission to the works was free to all persons ready to submit to the labour test until the receipt of orders contained in Famine Circular No. F-1805 of the 11th July.

Under these orders camps were closed in the Division, with the exception of camps selected to be kept open during the rains and those selected by Deputy Commissioner.

This was carried out with the proviso that people in want of food should be fed in Public Works Department camps until handed over to Civil Charge Officers.

In Bhandara district camps were closed for free admissions from the 21st July, with the exception of—

Gondia Camp,	No. 9
Beharia    "    "	8
Adyar       "    "	7
Lakhni     "    "	12

The first three camps were closed for free admissions, unless the applicants had chits from Charge Officers, on the 31st July 1900, by Deputy Commissioner, Bhandara.

Camps Nos. 7 and 8 were subsequently opened to free admissions by the Deputy Commissioner, Bhandara, on the 15th August 1900.

In Balaghat district the following camps were ordered to be kept open during the rains :—

Katangi	No. 1
Kirnapur   "    "	2
Waraseoni   "    "	3
Lamtha       "    "	4
Piparia       "    "	5

These camps were closed to free admissions on the 1st August 1900.

Camps Nos. 1, 2, 4 and 5 were opened to free admission by the Deputy Commissioner, Balaghat, of people coming from a radius of 5 miles from camp, on the 9th August. All camps as above were ordered to be kept open for free admissions to every one on the 19th August. A camp was previously closed for a short period, when it was arranged to draft people from the camp to a neighbouring camp, and was re-opened on the information of their arrival at the camp they were drafted to.

There was no system ordered or tried of selection at the commencement. There was no distance test of any kind insisted on. The majority of people lived in their own homes. Residence on the work was not compulsory.

Q. 24.—A large public work capable of entertaining two charges of 5,000 people could serve 20 miles long by 10 ten miles wide, or 200 square miles, if the people lived in their villages.

The majority of the people on relief came from within 5 miles of the work. The average greatest distance covered by the charges was in the Bhandara district 16 miles, in Balaghat district 15 miles.

Q. 25.—Officers of the Public Works Department were subordinate to the Executive Engineer of the Division, who was subordinate to the Commissioner of the Division and Superintending Engineer, Central Provinces—see paragraphs 13 and 14 of General Order No. 287—7630.

The Deputy Commissioner made arrangements for supply of grain and cash to camps, and fixed the grain rate on which wages were based. Ordered rest-day wage to be given as approved of by the Commissioner of the Division. Besides, under paragraph 49 of General Order No. 287—7630, the Deputy Commissioner was ordered, in consultation with Sub-Divisional Officers, to fix tasks; this was subsequently superseded by paragraph 9 of Circular letter No. 4-F.—1314, dated the 5th February 1900, in which the Executive Engineer was held responsible that full and fair tasks were exacted from workers.

Q. 26.—There was a Civil Officer for each charge; he was taken largely from the Naib-Tahsildar class, and subsequently officers from the Forest and other departments and outsiders were obtained. They were posted by the Commissioner of the Division.

They received pay at Rs. 100 a month with increments of Rs. 10 a month for good work rising to Rs. 150. They were posted to the Public Works Department and under the representatives of the Public Works Department.

The Civil Officer had no authority to see that measurements were correctly made; the majority of them could not have done so if they had received this order. The work agents were responsible for this—please see paragraphs 14 and 15 of General Order No. 287-7630.

The Civil Officers had to see that measurements were promptly made as laid down in Appendix V, paragraph 6 of General Order No. 287—7630.

The Civil Officer was ordered to follow the orders of Government as laid down at the end of paragraph 426 of the Report of the Famine Commission—*vide* General Order No. 287—7630, paragraph 14.

Q. 27.—If local conditions were met with that affected the prescribed task, it was the duty of the Civil Officers to report at once to the Sub-Divisional Officer, Public Works Department, who would fix the task or, if necessary, refer to the Executive Engineer—*vide* paragraph 5, Appendix V, General Order No. 287—7630, and paragraph 9 of Circular Letter No. 4-F.—1314.

Q. 28.—Gangs of labourers were constituted of men, women, and working children. The size of a gang was 30 persons.

The proportion of men, women, and children in a gang varied. Workers were always if possible, if sufficient were from one village placed together in a gang; but often there were too many or too few to make up complete gangs, each consisting of people from one village, and they had then to be made into a gang consisting of people from two or more villages.

Q. 29.—Labourers were classified at first exactly according to paragraph 445 and paid according to paragraph 446 of Famine Commission of 1898—please see paragraph 52 and Appendix I of General Order No. 287—7630.

This was subsequently altered in Circular Memorandum No. 6-1595, dated the 10th February, as follows:—

(a) The constant difference between mates and diggers was reduced from 2 pice to 1 pice.

(b) The diggers' wage scale was reduced from 20 chittaks to 19 chittaks.

(c) All women to be classed as carriers, *i. e.*, second class workers. As the classification was not altered the departure was justified from the administrative point of view. From the point of view of economy the departure was also justified.

Q. 30.—My experience led me to consider that there need be no distinction between men and women as to classification and wages. This was practically carried out under paragraph 4 (4) of Circular Letter No. 4-F.—1314, dated the 5th February, on carrying by head-loads, where men and women were classified as carriers. The distinction as drawn up by the Famine Commission of 1898, between wages and tasks of diggers and carriers was carried out throughout on other works, such as earthwork, metal-breaking, quarrying, with the proviso that men who were unable to do the full task of a digger were classified as carriers and paid accordingly. The absence of such distinction led to no difficulty. The classification of men and women as carriers caused a considerable saving to Government.

Q. 31.—The intermediate system or payment-by-results was adopted throughout, with the exception that weakly persons were employed on the Code task system with a minimum wage. These two systems were carried out at first in both districts, Bhandara and Balaghat, and in every case on the same work.

Subsequently it was found that by giving weakly people lighter task on the intermediate system, that they earned better pay and did more work, as without the fear of being fined below the minimum, they practically did nothing, as the penal wage could only be inflicted by the Famine Superintendent twice a week—see paragraph 26 (5), General Order No. 287—7630-F., dated the 20th September 1899.

Q. 32.—My experience led me to disagree with the Famine Commission of 1898, that a system of payments-by-results was unsuited to a condition of acute distress or actual famine, and I consider that, if started in time, relief can be adequately afforded in cases of severe famine, by works conducted throughout on a system of payment-by-results, as has been shown in both these districts.

Q. 33.—Tasks were exacted at the outset.

#### BHANDARA DISTRICT.

(a) *Metal-breaking (white quartz)*—

Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	6 cubic feet.
Carriers (2nd " " )	...	4 "

(b) *Metal-breaking (black stone)*—

Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	4½ cubic feet.
Carriers (2nd " " )	...	3 "

(c) *Rubble quarrying*—

Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	15 cubic feet.
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(d) *Rubble carrying by head-loads (400 rft. lead)*—

Men (2nd Class workers)	...	37½ cubic feet.
Women (2nd " " )	...	25 "
Children (3rd " " )	...	12½ "

(e) *Moorum quarrying*—

Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	45 cubic feet.
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(f) *Earthwork (bund measurement)*—

Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	80 cubic feet.
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(g) *Basket-making (materials supplied)*—

Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	No. 6.
Carriers (2nd " " )	...	" 4.



## BALAGHAT DISTRICT.

(a) <i>Metal-breaking (white quartz)</i> —		
Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	6 cubic feet.
Carriers (2nd " " )	...	4½ "
(b) <i>Metal-breaking (black stone)</i> —		
Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	4½ cubic feet.
Carriers (2nd " " )	...	3 "
(c) <i>Rubble quarrying</i> —		
Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	10 cubic feet.
(d) <i>Rubble carrying by head-loads (400 rft. lead)</i> —		
Men (2nd Class workers)	...	25 cubic feet.
Women (2nd " " )	...	16½ "
Children (3rd " " )	...	8 "
(e) <i>Moorum quarrying</i> —		
Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	45 cubic feet.
(f) <i>Earthwork (bund measurements)</i> —		
Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	80 cubic feet.
(g) <i>Basket-making (materials supplied)</i> —		
Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	No. 6.
Carriers (2nd " " )	...	" 4.

The task as shown above was graduated to the class of workers.

No allowance was made for distance workers had to come. They had the option of living on the work.

Subsequent changes of the task were in the direction of greater severity, with the exception of metal-breaking (black stone), when in both districts the task was reduced when the stone got cobbled from breaking off the corners.

The circumstances that led to the changes in task was holding the Executive Engineer responsible for making the task a full one (paragraph 9 of Circular Letter No. 4—F-1314) in supersession of General Order No. 287—7630-F, paragraph 49, which gave the authority of fixing task to the Sub-Divisional Officers and Deputy Commissioner.

Tasks in all cases were gradually raised, as it was seen that workers could do their full task and leave off early: it was introduced to all classes of people on the works.

The highest task reached on certain works was as follows:—

## BHANDARA DISTRICT.

(a) <i>Metal-breaking (white quartz)</i> —		
Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	8 cubic feet.
Carriers (2nd " " )	...	6 "
(b) <i>Rubble quarrying</i> —		
Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	25 cubic feet.
(c) <i>Rubble carrying by head-loads (400 rft. lead)</i> —		
Men (2nd Class workers)	...	48 cubic feet.
Women (2nd " " )	...	32 "
Children (3rd " " )	...	16 "
(d) <i>Moorum quarrying</i> —		
Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	65 cubic feet.
(e) <i>Earthwork (bund measurements)</i> —		
Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	110 cubic feet.
(f) <i>Basket-making (materials supplied)</i> —		
Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	No. 6.
Carriers (2nd " " )	...	" 4.

## BALAGHAT DISTRICT.

(a) *Rubble quarrying*—

Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	20 cubic feet.
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(b) *Rubble carrying by head-loads over a lead of 400 rft.*—

Men	(2nd Class works)	...	37½ cubic feet.
Women	(2nd „ „ )	...	25 „
Children	(3rd „ „ )	...	12½ „

(c) *Moorum quarrying*—

Diggers	...	...	65 cubic feet.
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(d) *Earthwork (bund measurements)*—

Diggers	...	...	100 cubic feet.
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(e) *Basket-making (materials supplied)*—

Diggers (1st Class workers)	...	No. 6.
Carriers (2nd „ „ )	...	„ 4

Q. 34.—My experience leads me to believe that the scale of wages was unduly liberal as regards families on works, but was adequate for single persons.

For instance, a man, his wife and two working children could earn, with Sunday or rest-day wage, at 10½ seers per rupee grain rate, Rs. 9-0-3, whereas a Government chaprasi with allowance for rise in price of grain would only get Rs. 7-8-0.

The condition of workers improved in Public Works Department camps, with the exception of working children. The condition of working children was in a large number of cases bad: this was owing not to the insufficiency of their wage, but to their parents appropriating it and not giving them sufficient food.

Workers, when a family, I believe saved on their wage. My reason for stating this is that the Civil Surgeon, Bhandara, and the Extra-Assistant Commissioner searched some famine labourers on the closing of Amgaon Camp No. 6 and found one man with Rs. 4 and others with a variety of small sums.

Also the Sub-Divisional Officer, Sakoli Sub-Division, informed me that the labourers in Adyar Camp were leaving in their homes four to six pice a week.

I consider whatever wage is given to famine labourers, they will save something out of it, and in order to do this if necessary starve themselves.

The Assistant Commissioner, Mr. Bathurst, informed me that at Pauni village he found an old man who had been on cash gratuitous relief in a bad state and had him searched and found he had saved practically all the rupees he had received on cash gratuitous relief.

Coin returned freely to the Banias on the works.

Q. 35.—Rest-day wage was given as follows:—

## BHANDARA DISTRICT.

Dongri Camp No. 1	...	...	Up to 22nd July.
Sakoli „ 2	...	...	Was given throughout.
Khairlanji „ 3	...	...	Up to 8th July.
Saongi „ 4	...	...	Was given throughout.
Korambi „ 5	...	...	Do.
Amgaon „ 6	...	...	Up to 8th July.
Adyar „ 7	...	...	Was given throughout.
Beharia „ 8	...	...	Up to 8th July.
Ambora „ 9	...	...	Do.
Mohari „ 10	...	...	Was never given.
Sehora „ 11	...	...	Was never stopped.
Lakhni „ 12	...	...	Do.

## BALAGHAT DISTRICT.

Rest-day wage was given throughout with the exception of Waraseoni Camp No. 3, where it was stopped from the 14th July to 28th July. Rest-day wage was given and stopped as recommended by the Deputy Commissioner of the district and approved by the Commissioner. Workers were unable to earn more than full wage.

My experience leads me to think that if it was possible to differentiate between families and single persons, rest-day wage should only be given to single persons.

Q. 36.—My experience leads me to consider that the minimum wage was not too high for weakly gangs employed on task work.

Q. 37.—The system was intermediate and was payment by results: there was no minimum wage except for weakly gangs. Weakly gangs were seldom fined for short work below the minimum wage when employed on the intermediate system with a light task.

Q. 38.—Payment was made daily.

Q. 39.—When people came on to a relief work they were paid daily.

Q. 40.—Payment was made to the mate of a gang of 30 persons, who distributed it to the famine labourers.

I consider any other method impracticable without a very large increase in staff, which it would be impossible to obtain.

Q. 41.—Below are given the figures showing at the time of greatest pressure the amount of workers earning full wage and those fined below minimum wage:—

(1) Beharia Camp No. 8, Bhandara district—Constructing the Tirora-Khairlanji Road.

On the 13th February 1900 out of 8,512 workers 6,542 earned full wage; out of the remainder 1,522 were fined on the average one-fifth of their pay, which enabled them to earn more than minimum wage.

The remainder 448 earned on the average half their pay, which made them be fined just below the minimum.

(2) Dongri Camp No. 1, Bhandara district—Metal-breaking Camp.

On 1st February out of 8,315 workers 5,214 received full wage, 2,840 workers were fined on the average one-fourth and received pay above minimum wage.

281 workers were fined half and received pay just below the minimum wage.

Q. 42.—The system of payment-by-results was in force with the exception of weakly gangs employed on the Code system of task work.

The system employed was practically that mentioned in paragraph 208 of the Report of the Indian Famine Commission of 1898, as the modified intermediate system of the North-West Provinces; with these exceptions, that nominal rolls of workers were not kept up, but gang registers employed with the number and classification of workers and the name of the mate, also that the gang was limited to 30 persons and that rest-day wage was given.

Q. 43.—The maximum wage given was, at first, cash equivalent to 20 chittaks for a man and then reduced to 19 chittaks, for a woman 15 chittaks. Children above the age of 8 were employed on works that suited their capabilities and paid the cash equivalent of 8 chittaks, and were not fined—see Circular Memorandum No. 6-1595, dated the 10th February, and General Order No. 287-7630-F, dated the 20th September 1899, paragraph 52.

Children below the age of 8 were fed in the kitchens on cooked food, kitchri; the cooked equivalent of 3 chittaks of dry grain to  $7\frac{1}{2}$  chittaks of grain was given according to age and was distributed twice daily—see paragraphs 93 and 94 of General Order No. 287-7630-F.

Weakly persons capable of some work were employed on task work with a minimum wage and subsequently on intermediate system with light task as mentioned in my answer to question 31.

This, in my opinion, is preferable to piece-work at favourable rates, though it would be better to feed all weakly persons in the kitchen till they are able to be employed on the intermediate system on full task, and this proposal would be more economical.

Q. 44.—Contractors were only employed on the construction of staff quarters in camp before camp opened and the collection of rubble when camp opened to allow of famine labour being employed at once on metal-breaking on arrival at a metal-breaking camp.

Q. 45.—Under payment-by-results system nominal muster rolls were not kept up, but a gang register was substituted—see Field Account Form No. 1, Appendix XI (a). Arrangement was made that if the system was altered to Code task system, the same gang registers could be utilized, with number of the gang being increased if necessary to go.

Q. 46.—The prices scale for the calculation of wages was fixed by the Deputy Commissioner with the approval of Commissioner.

Q. 47.—On the site for any particular camps having been chosen, the Sub-Divisional Officer proceeded to the spot with the contractor engaged to construct staff quarters, and would then mark out the position of the staff quarters, hospitals, cholera sheds, &c. During the erection of the huts, which generally took about three weeks, arrangements were made to send out tools from the sub-divisional store, and in order to receive these tools, a tools muharrir was sent out to the camp at least two weeks before the date fixed for opening.

At the same time, if an Officer-in-charge and work agents had been appointed, they were either sent out to other camps already running or accompanied the Sub-Divisional Officer to new camps being opened, with a view to their learning their work and assisting at the opening of the other camps.

Men likely to be able to do the work of gang muharrirs, kitchen muharrirs, conservancy guards, &c., were meanwhile instructed to be present at the new camp about to be opened at least one day before the date fixed for opening.

It was always advisable to send at least 10 men, capable of doing the work of gang muharrirs, to a new camp, as on more than one occasion 6,000 persons were admitted to a new camp in four days.

If possible, it was arranged that both the Famine Works Superintendent and Sub-Divisional Officer should be present at the new camp two days before the date of opening. In any case however it was found absolutely necessary that the Sub-Divisional Officer should be present.

Arrangements were made as laid down in General Order No. 287-7630-F, paragraph 87, for the supply of coin. An imprest of Rs. 1,000 was found much too small and Officers-in-charge's imprest accounts were changed to cash books.

The two days previous to opening were occupied in examining quarries so as to get an idea of what sort of metal was available, so as to decide on tasks for quarrying and metal-breaking, also looking up the leads from quarries so as to know how many gangs could be employed in carrying from each quarry, on the chain system as ordered; instructing Officer-in-charge and work agents in their various duties, and examining the gang muharrirs who were then only appointed as they were required and seemed capable of doing the work. On the actual day of opening the following arrangements were made.

A work agent with two or three gang muharrirs was sent out to either side of the camp to some quarry or other place where work was to be commenced, the work agent being told to what work the various gangs as organized would be sent, and each gang muharrir would have a day-book with him.

All tools were laid out in the tools enclosure, and the Officer-in-charge was sent to superintend their distribution.

All persons wishing to be admitted were instructed, as they came to the camp, to sit down on some open piece of ground.

The Famine Works Superintendent with the Hospital Assistant then proceeded to organise gangs, picking out weakly persons, who would be either sent to the camp kitchen or organised into weakly gangs as the circumstances of the case demanded.

As each gang was organised it was sent to the Sub-Divisional Officer who was seated at a table close by.

The gang then sits down in three lines according to their different classes. The Sub-Divisional Officer then made out their gang register, filling in only the entries on the front page, writing the name of the gang muharrir to whom they would have to report, and the tools they would require. He decided what work they would be suitable for, entering it

on the gang register, and directed them to the tools enclosure to obtain their tools from the tools muharrir, whence they were directed to the spot they should go for their work.

At the same time the Sub-Divisional Officer kept up a nominal roll of all mates with details regarding them, so that if any mate decamped the tools might be recovered.

When the gang reached the scene of its work, it was again mustered by the gang muharrir, who entered his muster on the gang register and also in his day-book and made out a receipt for all tools issued to the gang which was afterwards given to the tools muharrir. At the time of muster each mate was given a 3-foot bamboo with the number written on it in ink. The above procedure was carried out until all the coolies present were disposed of and the number on some occasion was more than 2,000 a day.

During the above organisation any Dhimals or men of other suitable caste were separated from the other gang and handed over to the Hospital Assistant who afterwards arranged for water-supply gangs. Gangs were also specially selected for the digging of wells and other necessary work.

In the afternoon the Sub-Divisional Officer and Famine Works Superintendent went out in different directions to look after the work and see the coolies were properly instructed. This was absolutely essential on carrying, as unless the coolies are properly instructed from the commencement some difficulty was experienced later on in getting them to carry systematically on the chain system.

If properly instructed they would often do full task in a few days after the opening of a camp.

The same procedure was carried on for four or five days until all applicants had been admitted, after which the Famine Works Superintendent and Sub-Divisional Officer stayed on a couple of days or so, if possible, to see that everything was going straight. The dependants that were sent to the kitchen at the time of organisation had their names, &c., all taken down by the kitchen muharrir, who kept a nominal roll like a muster roll showing the attendance of each dependant. Each dependant was at the same time given a wooden or tin ticket with his name and date of admission on it. As regards marking out works it was found that when a gang was continually employed on the same kind of work for some time, it was unnecessary to mark out their work daily. All that was necessary in the case of rubble collection or metal-breaking was to tell the mate the length of the stack required, as the other dimensions were always the same, and he knew by measuring his work with his 3-foot bamboo whether or not he had completed his task. On earthwork however the task was always marked out by the work agent, who generally gave the gang sufficient work for one week and had therefore each morning only to make a *dágbél* showing up to where he had measured the work and tasks to be done.

Each work agent was allowed a *khalassi* to assist in measuring up work, and *tindals*, as necessary, to look after the work.

The water-supply was placed under the Hospital Assistant, who, if he required men or materials of any kind, obtained them from the Officer-in-charge.

As regards the actual distribution of water, this was carried out as per General Order No. 287—7630-F., paragraphs 100 to 104.

Every well was guarded and the Hospital Assistant had instructions to frequently inspect them.

Hospital requirements were supplied in three ways:—

- (1) English medicines according to authorized list were supplied by Executive Engineer. Any further supplies required were obtained through the Civil Surgeon.
- (2) Country medicines were supplied by the Sub-Divisional Officer on indent from Officers-in-charge.
- (3) Necessaries, such as milk, sago, &c., were obtained by the Officer-in-charge from the local bania and the bill paid monthly by Executive Engineer in the same manner as that for rice and dal supplied to kitchens.

Q. 48.—Tasks could be stiffened under the orders of the Executive Engineer or such qualified person whom he might depute (paragraph 9 of Circular letter No. 4-F—1314).

Wages were stiffened or relaxed by the Deputy Commissioner under orders contained in paragraph 55 of General Order No. 283—7630-F.

Q. 51.—Arrangements were made to draft 1,000 people from the large Public Works metal-breaking Camp at Amgaon, Bhandara district, to the village work, at a distance of four miles, of constructing Amgaon tank, on the 22nd May 1900, at the request of the

Deputy Commissioner, Bhandara, as labour was required for the completion of the tank. The transfer was successfully performed.

Q. 92.—The tests employed were not sufficient to prevent persons not in need of relief from seeking it.

In one camp in Balaghat, I saw people driving up in bullock carts.

In Bhandara in one camp, it was reported that mates of gangs were riding to their work.

In another camp in Bhandara, the Famine Works Superintendent, Bhandara, enquired why the people were being fined heavily, and they informed him that they only wanted 2 or 3 pice to buy tobacco.

Q. 93.—The only further test I can propose would be the distance test. This would be difficult to enforce, as it would be nearly impossible to prevent people exchanging their tickets with people living near the camp, and they could not be identified without the Patwari or Mukaddam of the village. People would in a good number of cases prefer to remain and starve in their houses in preference to submitting to the distance test.

Q. 98.—There was no regular inspection of grain shops in camps: the grain purchased for kitchen was regularly inspected. The Civil Surgeon, Balaghat, discovered some grain in a grain shop in a camp in Balaghat and had it destroyed.

Q. 109.—Staff Corps Officers were posted to Public Works Department, and two were posted to Bhandara Division, one in each district. They were employed on supervision. Officers of the Native Army and Non-Commissioned Officers of the British Army were not employed in this Division. I am unable to suggest any other source that supervising officers can be drawn, as departments would be unable to spare men, and I consider that it is absolutely necessary that the supervising staff should be gentlemen accustomed to discipline, prompt to obey orders, and see them carried out.

J. P. BLAKEWAY, CAPTAIN, R. E.,

*Executive Engineer,*

*The 4th January 1901.*

*Bhandara.*

SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE OF MR. CHANDI PARSHAD, HONORARY  
MAGISTRATE OF CHANDA.

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THE crop in the famine year was one anna. Distress began in November. This was proved by the rush of people to the tank opened by the Municipality.

Cholera came from the drought. I had to pay labourers two or three annas instead of one anna because of the famine rates. And sometimes I had difficulty in getting them.

The people could not have lived without assistance.

The cultivated area is up to the average.





Answers by Mr. CHANDI PRASAD, Honorary Magistrate, Balaghat District,  
to the questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

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Q. 1.—When the rains commenced the state of the crops in our district was but fair. The crops were not good for the last two years.

Q. 2.—The kharif sowings were up to normal, but the transplanting of rice was not up to normal.

Q. 4.—The percentage of the kharif harvest in 1899 was 7.

Q. 5.—The population of this district dependent on agriculture is—cultivators 6 in 16, labourers 5 in 16.

Q. 6.—Owing to the failure of the crops there was necessity of relief.

Q. 7.—In this district agriculture is the main occupation. The crops failed. People did not get labour. They were starving, and it was necessary to start relief.

Q. 8.—When kitchens, road and tank works were opened people came to these works in numbers, and it was then known that the distress was severe.

Q. 9.—Government officers having made enquiry it was reported that there would be famine, and then arrangements were made to open relief works.

Q. 10.—These lists were prepared according as necessity arose.

Q. 11.—(a) Test-works were taken.

(b) There were no poor-houses in this district.

(c) Kitchens were opened on works and also elsewhere.

(d) In Chanda and Warora cheap grain shops were established from funds raised by subscriptions.

(e) The Government forests were opened.

Q. 12.—(a) At first Charge Officers were appointed: there were two or three Circle Officers under them. Each circle was in charge of a Circle Officer.

(b) When a work was opened in a village people from the surrounding village came there.

(c) Relief was given by Government.

(d) The Charge Officers always observed the condition of the people.

Q. 13.—At the time of the kharif sowing, takavi was given in advance for purchase of seed-grain and bullocks. This debt is to be realized by instalments.

Q. 14.—There are no wells in this district for grain crop irrigation. There are wells from which only the vegetable and sugarcane crops are watered.

On the cessation of the rains in 1899, the water in the wells was much ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  times) below the average mark.

No loans were granted for the digging of wells.

(a) No.

(b) Improvement was made.

(c) No.

Q. 15.—At first road works and *gitti* works were undertaken. Some of these roads were under the District and Local Boards. The work was done under the supervision of the Public Works Department.

Q. 16.—Work was exacted from people who came on the works of their own accord irrespective of previous occupation.

Q. 17.—(1) Payment was made not in proportion to results, but to enable the labourers to support themselves.

(2) Half the allowances were given on rest days and allowance was made to the dependants.

Q. 18.—When it was found that people could not do certain work they were given ordinary easy work.

Q. 19.—Tank works were opened in the district where it was considered necessary.

Q. 20.—The works were under the supervision of Officers-in-charge and Charge Officers, and in some places under the supervision of the mukaddams.

There was no delay in opening the works: the tools and plant were available in time.

Q. 22.—Each charge had its own establishment. Each Officer-in-charge had a separate establishment. Arrangements were made for hutting the people, for conservancy, for water-supply and for food-supply.

Q. 23.—Admission to the works was free to all persons ready to submit to the labour test. People were employed on work by the ticket system. They lived on the works. There was no necessity of going at a distance.

Q. 24.—If there are more than 5,000 persons in one charge the work is not done as it should be. People had to go to reside on the works if the camp was situated at a distance of 10 or 20 kos from their home.

Q. 25.—The charges were under the officers of the Civil Department: their detail is not known.

Q. 30.—Men work more than women do, hence there was distinction in their wages. But the food expenses for a man and a woman are the same.

Q. 31.—The system of payment was the same throughout.

Q. 32.—By opening works, relief is afforded to the distressed people, but the real famine does not diminish thereby.

Q. 33.—At first *gitti*-breaking and road work were introduced.

No allowance was made for the distance the workers had come.

Q. 34.—The task was exacted calmly. The wages were duly paid. But the grain was dear and the people experienced difficulty. Liberal wages were not paid. The workers, as a rule, did not save upon their earnings. Wages were in the shape of copper coins. These they paid to the Bania in exchange of grain.

Q. 35.—On rest day they supported themselves with what they *received* saved. They did not get other labour. In my opinion full wages should be given.

Q. 36.—In time of famine the labourers should not be fined.

Q. 38.—The payment was daily made and this is the proper system.

Q. 39.—Payment was made daily and this did not throw the workers into the debt of the Bania. The Bania did not give them debt.

Q. 40.—Payment was made to individuals, and this is the proper system.

Q. 43.—I do not know what ~~was~~ the maximum wage. Kitchens were opened for the relief of the children and the weakly persons. The weakly persons did not work. It is right to give them wages, for they cannot do task work.

Q. 44.—Contractors were employed for some works.

Q. 47.—I am not aware of the steps adopted in opening relief work admitting and classifying labourers and imposing fines.

But arrangements were made for proper water-supply and establishment of hospitals in different places.

Q. 51.—The effect of drafting people from large public to small village works was that they were near to their places of residence.

Q. 52.—*Excavation of tanks.*

Q. 53.—Repairs of tanks.

Q. 54.—The works were conducted under the supervision of Public Works Department. The work was smoothly done under the supervision of Civil agency. Some works were also done under the supervision of malguzars and mukaddams.

Q. 55.—(a) Circle Officers and Charge Officers were appointed.

(b) In some places Overseers and Circle Officers measured the work.

(c) Payments were made through the mukaddams. The mukaddams inspected the work once every day. The works were done under the supervision of Circle and Charge Officers.

Q. 56.—Wages were paid according to the rule. Those who were willing to work were employed.

Q. 58.—If the works existed close to one another labourers were drafted from the one to the other.

Q. 59.—In my opinion small village relief (tank works) works should be extended. By this the water-supply of the village will be adequate and the labourers will not be required to leave their homes.

Q. 60.—There are aboriginal tribes in this district. Special tests were applied to them. They were forward. They went to the works whenever they were opened.

Q. 61.—Grass-cutting work was opened in the forests. The work was controlled by the forest authorities. Those who wished went to the work.

Q. 62.—Labourers were engaged by Charge Officers for weeding the fields of the cultivators.

Q. 63.—Relief was not given to the weavers and others.

Q. 64.—Owing to dearness of grain their business was slack and some of them were obliged to go on relief works. They were physically unfit for labour.

Q. 65.—Relief works were not given to the artizans.

Q. 66.—The jungles were open for grazing. Thereby many cattle were protected.

Q. 67.—From this district grass and karbi were supplied to those parts of the country where it was wanted.

Q. 68.—In some places cash was given and in some places uncooked or cooked food was given.

Q. 69.—The forms of gratuitous relief were employed according to necessity.

Q. 71.—There were no poor-houses in this district.

Q. 72.—No.

Q. 74.—There were kitchens only in a few places before the rainy season, but after the rains set in kitchens were started in about 200 or 250 villages. People from the surrounding villages attended these kitchens.

Q. 75.—Cooked food was given according to fixed ration. At first meals were distributed twice a day afterwards only once. They were fed on the kitchen premises.

Q. 76.—Kitchens were opened in places according to the distance of the village. Kitchens were also opened close to relief works.

Q. 77.—Admission to kitchens was free, it was not restricted.

Q. 78. (4) The Circle Officers inspected once a week and Charge Officers once a month.

Q. 76. (4) Cash was given to them monthly at their homes.

Q. 77. (6) Gratuitous relief was given to those who were physically unfit for labour and also to some respectable persons who were not accustomed to labour. This relief was given since the relief works were opened.

Q. 78.—They were in need of relief. In some places Brahmins were employed and in others Kunbis were engaged. Where Kunbis were employed as cooks, only those who by custom were allowed to take food cooked by a Kunbi took the food. In places where *Pardeshi* Brahmins were employed, *Marals* and others did not take food from the kitchens.

Some persons did not take food because they would have been excommunicated from their caste had they eaten food sitting in the same line in which persons of other castes sat.

Q. 79.—The Charge Officers and the District Officers inspected the works.

Q. 80.—A shop was opened and thereby the poor people got grain at a cheaper rate.

Q. 81.—There was no reduction and there was no change.

Q. 82.—The land revenue was not remitted, it was suspended. The collections were made according to the state of the crops—in some places 8 annas and in others 1 rupee, 4 annas, 6 annas, 10 annas, or 12 annas.

Q. 83.—They were based on the crops and the failure of the crops.

Q. 84.—At the time of revenue collection.

Q. 86.—Relief was given on account of suspension or remission of revenues.

Q. 87.—The people of this district are very poor, and relief was given them considering their condition.

Q. 88.—The relief was adequate.

Q. 89.—The people in receipt of relief belonged to all castes. There were some tenants and malguzars.

Q. 90.—This famine was more severe than the former one and people were willing to come on relief because they had no means of support.

Q. 91.—When the crops failed there was no chance of realization. The creditors had no faith in them (debtors). The time had passed.

Q. 92.—It is proper to employ persons on work after they have been put to test.

Q. 93.—As above.

Q. 94.—The kotwal reports to the Police, who prepare the register.

Q. 96.—The water of the tanks, wells and rivers was dried up and became impure. Medicines were used once a week.

Q. 97.—Sweepers were employed for sanitary arrangements. These arrangements were supervised by Officers-in-charge of the work.

Q. 98.—The grain shop was regularly inspected. It was well managed.

Q. 99.—In the forests of this district *katang* or bamboo seed was produced. This was used by the poor people for food. The wild products had no appreciable effect upon their health. There were no other products besides this.

Q. 100.—Very few people came from other provinces.

Q. 101.—Very few people came from other districts, consequently the number of deaths was not large.

Q. 102.—Those orphans who had any relatives, or whom the caste-people were willing to take, were made over to them; the rest were made over to the Missionaries.

Q. 104.—In this district no grass was imported, but a large quantity of <sup>*grass*</sup> ~~grass~~ was brought in.

Q. 105.—As public works were open men for private labour <sup>*were*</sup> ~~was~~ not available, because in private labour the wages are not so liberal as in public works.

Q. 106.—In this year food crops were sown to a great extent.

Q. 107.—The wages are generally paid in grain, cash is paid only for weeding work. This is the proper custom.

Q. 109.—It would be better if persons who are acquainted with the district were appointed officers.

Q. 110.—Great help was received from those who were well educated.

Q. 112.—There will be no change in the condition of the people of the village <sup>*where*</sup> ~~when~~ a new tank is excavated or an old tank is repaired and labour is procured locally.

*Bhanda*

BALAGHAT:

The 4th January 1901. }

CHANDI PRASAD,

Honorary Magistrate.



SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE OF MR. VENKAT RAO NAIK, MALGUZAR  
OF JAMB.

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Dis~~se~~mmenced in August. Relief was adequate, but not excessive.





Answers by VENKAT RAO NAIK, Malguzar of Jamb, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

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Q. 54 (a).—In this district village works were opened and they were conducted under the supervision of the Executive Engineer.

(b) No works were conducted under the supervision of civil officers.

(1) The malguzars have conducted the works under the control of the Deputy Commissioner. The work was checked and examined by the Circle and Charge Officers.

(2) Generally the works were conducted through the malguzars.

Q. 55.—Daily attendance of the labourers employed on the works was taken. Tickets were issued to them. Sheds were provided for their wives and children to protect them from the sun. *Katcha* wells were dug for supply of fresh water. The labourers were required to work from 9 A. M. to 4 P. M. Afterwards they use to go to their homes. Arrangements were made for the hutting of those labourers who came from a great distance. The number of such persons, however, was very small.

(a) The malguzar used to measure the work every day. The Charge and Circle Officers also measured the work when on tour. The Overseers used to check the work and prepare the accounts.

(b) The work was conducted on *pasodi* system. A *pasodi* is a measure 9 feet long, 9 feet broad and 1 foot deep. Work was taken at the rate of 2 to 12 *pasodis* per rupee according to the nature of the ground (hard or soft) and according to the distance of the place when the earth was removed.

(c) The malguzars received money in advance through the Charge Officers. They made the payments very second day after measuring the work.

The Charge and Circle Officers checked the work and the Deputy Commissioner also checked it when on tour.

Q. 56.—The work was exacted from the labourers on the local system other than the system prescribed in the Famine Code, and payment was made on the *pasodi* system referred to in answer No. 55 (b).

The malguzars enquired into the condition of the labourers who came on the works. They also examined their bodies to see whether they were physically fit to do labour, and only those persons were employed who were considered fit for the work.

Q. 57.—The labourers were required to work from 9 A. M. to 4 P. M. Up to 9 A. M. they used to do ordinary labour for which they received small wages.

Q. 58.—This was not often done.

Q. 59.—In my opinion village works are preferable to large public works (camps) because if tanks are dug everywhere, the rice crop will not fail even if there was a scanty rainfall. In the last famine, *i. e.*, in 1896-97, I received a loan of Rs. 6,000 from Government, a tank was constructed in mauza Dongargaon, and on account of this tank the crop of the village did not suffer much in the year 1899. Similarly in the Bhandara District the rice crop in those places where there were good tanks, *viz.*, the Nawegaon bandh. The Seoni bandh did not suffer much. In my opinion it is therefore very desirable that village works, specially tank works, should be extended in this district.

Q. 68.—Persons in camps and on tank works were given relief in the kitchens. The cooked grain was never given. Cash was given to purchase milk for the feeble babies.

Q. 69.—In my opinion the number of persons who were given relief in the kitchens was very small.

Q. 75.—The meals were distributed twice in a day, *viz.*, between 10 and 11 in the morning and again between 4 and 5 in the evening. They were not allowed to take the food away to their homes.

Q. 77.—The patwaris, mukaddams, kitchen muharrirs and Circle and Charge Officers made enquiry about the persons wishing admission to the kitchens. Only those who were in need of relief were admitted.

Q. 75. <sup>(a)</sup> They did not come. Enquiry used to be made as stated above.

Q. 76. <sup>(c)</sup> Generally cash payments were made monthly, but in the case of sick persons payments were made after an interval 9 or 15 days until their recovery.

Q. 77. <sup>(a)</sup> I think gratuitous relief was not given to persons other than those mentioned in the Code.

Q. 78.—Men of high castes, such as Kunbi, Sonar &c., or of the caste to which the greater number of the beggars belonged, were employed as cooks.

Q. 79.—The Charge and Circle Officers inspected the kitchens and checked the accounts. Grain was supplied according to the rule and the bills were prepared accordingly.

Q. 80.—No.

Q. 86.—Rents were realized from some tenants. The condition of their crops was not taken into account. The amount, which was ordered to be paid into the Treasury, was realized from the tenants. The cunning and crafty tenants, however, did not pay anything to the malguzars. On the other hand, they said that the revenue was suspended: and the deficiency was made up by further realization from the poor tenants without taking into account the state of their crops.

Q. 90.—In this famine the people were more ready to come on relief than in former famines.

Q. 105.—No complaints were heard.

Q. 106.—Owing to the famines of the year 1896-1897 and 1899-1900, the tenants have been reduced to poverty. They are unable to procure costly seed; ordinarily people are inclined to use such seed which can be sown in smaller quantities, but which covers a larger area. For instance *tilli*. A small quantity of this seed can be sown in a large area. It is therefore sown extensively. This grain is costly, but it is not used as a food-grain both by men and cattle. *Juari* and *ringna* are also sown extensively, because these grains, though not very paying, are used as food-grains both by men and cattle. The *dhan* seed is required to be sown in larger quantity. It is sown only by those who could afford to procure it, with a view to save it for future stocks. But generally *ringna*, *tilli*, &c., are sown in place of *dhan*.

WARDHA :  
The 8th January 1901. }

VENKAT RAO NAIK,  
Malguzar of Jamb.

EXTRACTS FROM THE EVIDENCE OF LIEUTENANT-COLONEL W. A.  
QUAYLE, I.M.S., CIVIL SURGEON, NAGPUR.

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A.—I was only three months in Nagpur—January, February and part of March.

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*The President.*—Well, I think we may take the substance of your evidence to be that in those three months, at the commencement, the season was unusually unhealthy, more so than in ordinary years, owing to malarial fevers; that a part of the cholera and fever that prevailed was such as prevails in ordinary years. You noticed in the famine hospitals that you had a number of immigrants. The immigrants were more subject to famine complaints than the people of the district. You don't think the people of the district were unusually affected. The water-supply was very bad and continued bad. The heat was extremely great. You had no reason to be dissatisfied with the character of the grain sold on public works.

A.—That is so.

Q.—Had you any reason to be dissatisfied with the food distributed at the kitchens?

A.—No.

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*Mr. Bourdillon.*—Were you in Nimar in 1897?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How did the sickness in 1900 compare with 1897; do you remember?

A.—It was much less in 1897.

Q.—Was there any trouble about water in 1897?

A.—No; there were fairly good rains.

Q.—That rather looks as if the water-supply had something to do with the sickness?

A.—Yes.



Q. 94.—On relief works most of the deaths occurred in hospital and were entered in a book kept for the purpose by the Hospital Assistant. Similarly, deaths outside hospital when not seen by the Hospital Assistant were reported to him by the gang muharirs and registered.

Births were also reported by the gang muharirs and entered in a register kept in hospital.

All vital occurrences were reported to the Police weekly by the Hospital Assistant.

Q. 95.—There is no evidence to show that a very high mortality was due to diseases connected with unsuitable or insufficient food, except perhaps in the case of infants, whose mothers' milk failed owing to hard work in the open during a very hot, trying and unhealthy season.

It was the exception in this district to see emaciated and debilitated persons, and individuals dying from unsuitable or insufficient food would usually be in this condition.

Q. 96.—The water in the wells, tanks and rivers fell very low and in many completely dried up. That which remained contained much concentrated organic matter, and was frequently green and muddy. The drinking of such water must have been harmful, and have resulted in attacks of diarrhoea and dysentery.

On all the relief-works the wells were deepened and cleaned out, and permanganate of potash was used as a disinfectant once a week, or in times of epidemics every other day.

In villages near the camps, the wells were also cleaned out, deepened and disinfected. In many other villages wells were cleaned out and deepened, also new wells were dug.

Q. 97.—*Sanitary arrangements.*—1. On works. *Water-supply.*—Rivers and wells were guarded as far as possible to prevent contamination and waste of water. Barrel filter wells were sunk in the beds of streams or in moorum bunds thrown across pools and nalas. Special men with ropes and doles were employed for raising water, which was conveyed in iron or wooden barrel carts to the piaos scattered through the camp.

The wells, water-carts and piaos were permanganated once a week, and in times of epidemics every other day.

*Conservancy.*—Flags were erected at a distance of 250 yards from the camps, and beyond these the workers were obliged to go for purposes of nature. In some camps trench latrines were dug and used, but it was not always possible to get the workers to resort to them.

*Persons suffering* from epidemic diseases were treated in special huts and the relatives were segregated for ten days from the other workers.

*Dead bodies* were buried at long distance from the camp and deep graves were kept ready dug for use.

Vaccinators frequently attended the camps. All these arrangements were immediately supervised by the Hospital Assistant in charge, and inspected by the Civil Surgeon when he visited the camp.

*Poor-houses.*—The piao system was also adopted in these and permanganate of potash was used weekly. Special latrines were constructed and cleaned by mehtars, the dry-earth system being adopted.

The Hospital Assistant in charge supervised the arrangements and the poor-houses were frequently visited by the Civil Surgeon.

*Kitchens.*—These were simply enclosures where persons were fed or received cooked food. The wells in the village were permanganated by the Hospital Assistant, who visited the kitchens about three or four times a month. The sanitation of the surroundings of the kitchen was attended to.

Q. 98.—The grain shops were regularly inspected by the Officer-in-charge, the Hospital Assistant and the Civil Surgeon. Occasionally badly husked grain was found, but unwholesome grains rarely. Teora was always exposed for sale, but paralysis from the consumption of this grain was not once observed.

Q. 99.—In the jungly parts of Nimar the people invariably supplement their food with wild products,—roots, mahua, tendu fruit and berries of all kinds. These exercise no injurious influence on their health.

Q. 100.—In Nimar during the opening months of the year 1900 the immigration from Native States was considerable. I cannot even roughly estimate their number.

Q. 101.—In the early months of the year the relief camp hospitals of Nimar were chiefly occupied by starved wanderers from outside the district. The death-rate therefore was very probably proportionately higher than that of the people of the district.

NAGPUR: }  
The 10th January 1901. }

W. A. QUAYLE, LIEUT.-COL., I. M. S.,

Civil Surgeon.

MR. G. M. CHITNAVIS, C.I.E., PRESIDENT, NAGPUR CITY MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE.

*The President*—You are a large landholder. In what districts?

A.—Most of my villages are in the Nagpur and Bhandara districts.

Q.—Do you remember the scarcity and relief operations of 1897, and also last year?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Of the 1897 and 1899 failures which was the more severe?

A.—The failure of 1897.

Q.—Would you first tell us what proportion of the crops failed in 1896-97; out of 16 annas what was the failure?

A.—I believe 10 annas failed.

Q.—And how many in 1899-1900?

A.—I believe 14 annas.

Q.—Was there only two annas left?

A.—Yes in the cotton and *juar*-producing districts. Cotton was better in 1900 than in 1897.

Q.—Was any food crop better in 1900 than in 1897?

A.—No, comparatively speaking.

Q.—On the whole the failure was considerably heavier?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Between the two famines you had four crops: were these good or average crops?

A.—The 1898 *khariif* was good, but the *rabi* failed.

Q.—Was the *rabi* of 1899 good?

A.—It was not good.

Q.—Was it an 8 anna crop or 10-anna?

A.—It was a six-anna crop.

Q.—Did you ask for or receive any remissions of revenue in 1898 or 1899, up to the failure of the late harvests?

A.—In 1899 in the Bhandara district some remission was given.

Q.—No remission was asked for under the crop remission rules?

A.—No.

Q.—You are entitled to ask for it, are you not, if the crop is below a certain estimated outturn?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In your villages were you entrusted with the administration of relief, or did Government exclusively administer it?

A.—In some of my villages tanks and wells were made by my agents.

Q.—Was money advanced for them by Government, or did you bear any portion of the expense?

A.—In some cases I bore the expense; in others the money was given by Government.

Q.—Was that money paid on the system of recovering partly from you?

A.—Not this year.

Q.—In how many villages were relief works started on your estate?

A.—In three villages in the Bhandara district.

Q.—How many villages have you?

A.—About 50 villages.

Q.—And in how many did you start relief works yourself?

A.—I made wells and embankments mostly. I undertook relief work in about 15 villages.

Q.—You started works in 15 villages and Government in three: am I to understand that in the balance, 32 villages, no work was opened?

A.—No; the people went on to public works.

Q.—When did it strike you from the reports you received from your agents that the people first got into depressed circumstances?

A.—It was when I was at Simla in September 1899.

Q.—What did your agents report?

A.—That there were signs of rioting, and that the people were hard up for grain, and then I heard that relief works were opened.

Q.—When did you come back from Simla?

A.—In the middle of October.

Q.—Did you visit your villages then?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What condition did you find them in?

A.—Relief works had been opened by Government and some were opened by me. All the works were full. There were some well-to-do people; but most of those who had joined the works were badly off.

- Q.—Did you find in your villages any traces of emaciation or starvation ?  
A.—No, I did not find any at that time.  
Q.—Any in October ?  
A.—No ; in November there were some. In the first famine I saw some of my villages and in the beginning I saw the people emaciated.  
Q.—In what month ?  
A.—In November and December.  
Q.—Were works open at that time ?  
A.—Yes ; the programme was made out a little late.  
Q.—On the present occasion the programme was made out early and the people had gone to works. You saw no signs of emaciation ?  
A.—No.  
Q.—Do you think that the works that were open were sufficient for all who wanted relief ?  
A.—I think so.  
Q.—Was there gratuitous relief in the villages in the commencement ?  
A.—Yes, in some of my villages it was distributed.  
Q.—What was the plan ?  
A.—Those who were aged and infirm and could not go to relief works were paid Rs. 2 or Rs. 3 a month.  
Q.—Was it paid to able-bodied ?  
A.—Yes, in some of my villages it was given to some of them.  
Q.—Was it given to the able-bodied or only to the old and infirm, or was there any qualification required ?  
A.—The relief officers made the inspection.  
Q.—Was there any inquiry as to whether they had any friends able to support them ?  
A.—Yes ; there was an inquiry made.  
Q.—Through whom ?  
A.—The *tahsildar*.  
Q.—Were you asked to have lists made out for your villages ?  
A.—Relief officers made the selection, and my agents assisted sometimes.  
Q.—Were relief lists made out under your authority ?  
A.—They were made under the authority of the relief officers, but in consultation with my agents.  
Q.—You were not cognizant of anything done ?  
A.—I saw how far people took advantage of the relief works.  
Q.—Was relief given by means of kitchens or the distribution of money doles, or grain doles ?  
A.—To small children through kitchens in the first instance ; in the rains to all who required it by way of kitchens.  
Q.—In the commencement were not kitchens established ?  
A.—For small children they were.  
Q.—And as regards other persons considered entitled to it, did they get food in the kitchens, or grain or money ?  
A.—Money.  
Q.—Money, up to what time ?  
A.—Until the kitchens were commenced in the rains.  
Q.—Not in kitchens before the rains ?  
A.—No.  
Q.—Are you quite sure upon that point ?  
A.—Yes. There were kitchens for small children in the villages.  
Q.—Do you prefer distribution by kitchens or distribution by doles of grain or money ?  
A.—I think distribution through kitchens is better.  
Q.—What is your reason ?  
A.—Because when cooked food is given people are not able to buy luxuries.  
Q.—Do the people prefer to get grain and cook it in their houses or go to the kitchens and get food ?  
A.—The people would prefer cash.  
Q.—Do you think they would prefer the distribution of grain, and to be allowed to cook it themselves ?  
A.—I think so, because they have scruples of caste.  
Q.—These scruples did not stand very much in their way this year, did they ?  
A.—No. Because they were so hard up for food.  
Q.—Which would be the more expensive, kitchens or the distribution of grain through respectable persons of the village, trusting to them to give relief only to those who wanted it ?  
A.—It has to be worked out.  
Q.—In the distribution of charitable relief would you prefer kitchens and give food to all who came, or trust to your agents, reliable and respectable men in the village, to give, say, 10 *chhataks* of grain to those people that they considered from their knowledge to be deserving ; which plan would you adopt if you had to administer gratuitous relief ?  
A.—It would have been impossible this year to make this distinction.  
Q.—What do you mean ? What distinction ?  
A.—To find out who deserved it and who did not deserve it.



Q.—It would be impossible to make any distinction as to who deserved and who did not deserve it?

A.—Considering the distress was so widespread, there could be no such discrimination.

Q.—Well, but if you had time to discriminate, which system would you prefer?

A.—I would prefer the system of making it over to respectable persons.

Q.—If properly administered, which would be the least costly, the system of kitchens or the system of discrimination and distribution of grain?

A.—That has to be worked out.

Q.—What is your impression, people do not cheat in dealing with the poor of the villages?

A.—Generally they do not cheat.

Q.—At all events the people who have to receive relief would not be cheated. If anybody were cheated, you would be cheated. On which side would lie the balance of advantage?

A.—I think I would discriminate.

Q.—And make the grain distribution?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You said this year there could not be any discrimination, why?

A.—The failure was so widespread and the people had lost their staying power.

Q.—Do you think the landlords had no power to help them?

A.—They were themselves hard hit.

Q.—Did they collect any rents this year?

A.—In *kharif kist* some part was realized and paid to Government. The *rabī kist* was altogether suspended, and nothing could be got out of the people.

Q.—So far as you know, from your own experience, do you think any persons went to relief works who might have done without going on to them?

A.—As far as my villages are concerned, I can say no one who could have done without relief went on to the works. In Nagpur we managed the Jumma tanks, and there, too, only those who were really needy went.

Q.—Did the people who went to relief works get into good physical condition?

A.—When they first came they were found to be emaciated, but afterwards they were found to be able-bodied. They did not lose strength on the Jumma tank.

Q.—Was the pay they received at the tanks sufficient?

A.—They could not save anything. It was sufficient for the day.

Q.—It has been said that they were able to save a little, especially if they went in a family, very little no doubt. What does the labourer eat in the day? How many *chhataks* of *juár*?

A.—I believe from 8 to 10 *chhataks*.

Q.—He will have a good meal on 10. Besides there are other things?

A.—Yes: condiments, chillies, salt.

Q.—If you were to express these in *juár*, how many *chhataks* of *juár* would you give him?

A.—12 or 13 *chhataks* of *juár*.

Q.—What sum in other grains, rice or *dál*?

A.—That would depend upon the variation of prices. It would have to be worked out.

Q.—*Juár* is the usual grain for labourers in this part of the country?

A.—Yes.

Q.—12 or 13 *chhataks* is a fair allowance for a labouring man?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Would you give a labouring woman less or more?

A.—I think as much.

Q.—Does a woman eat as much as a man?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is the same money wage ordinarily paid to the man as to the woman?

A.—That depends upon the sort of labour.

Q.—The ordinary labour in the fields is harvest labour?

A.—The women who work well get the same sometimes.

Q.—Are female coolies paid the same?

A.—They are paid less.

Q.—How much is paid to a man coolie?

A.—10 to 12 pice.

Q.—How much to a woman?

A.—Six pice.

Q.—That is only half?

A.—She is helped by her male members. A man would get 13 *chhataks*.

Q.—What would a boy from 10 to 14 years of age eat?

A.—About eight or nine *chhataks*.

Q.—If he got 10 *chhataks* he would be well off?

A.—Yes.

Q.—When we give the labourers 15 to 19 *chhataks* we pay them a little too much, don't we?

A.—I don't think that would be too much in the case of a dinner.

Q.—The digger gets 19 *chhataks* and the carrier 15. When you find people satisfied with earning the smaller wage, don't you think they earn as much as they want? They won't work harder because they have sufficient to eat?

A.—Yes; I think so.

Q.—Well, now we come to the rains. When the rains commenced a great number of people returned to their villages and there was a great extension of gratuitous relief. The inference is that a number of people who were working upon relief works went back to the villages and came on to charitable relief. Is it not the custom of the country that when the rains commence agricultural work opens and employment is available in the fields?

A.—Yes; that is the general rule.

Q.—But in these particular cases you say there was not a sufficiency of work in the fields, and possibly it may be that people who in other years hire labour did their work themselves, and in that way the labour market was overstocked?

A.—Yes; much of the land remained fallow.

Q.—I shall ask you about that afterwards. In some of the districts the *khariif* land is up to the normal. Well, now, do you think it would have been safe to have told these people who were working upon the works "go back and you will find work as usual," and not to have given them any promise of gratuitous relief in kitchens?

A.—I think they wanted the relief very badly. When they returned from relief works they were starving.

Q.—Are people not required to repair the roofs of houses and for other work as well as for agricultural labour?

A.—Nothing of the kind was done this year. In villages, houses were uncared for as people were not there.

Q.—Still they had to be cared for before the rains came?

A.—People did not spend much money this year on house repairs. They were hard up and spent nothing.

Q.—What were the wages of labour during the rains, cheaper or dearer?

A.—Considering the prices, I believe they were a little dearer, not much.

Q.—Would an employer of labour have got labour last year for less than in an ordinary year?

A.—In an ordinary year he would have got labourers for 9 to 12 pice.

Q.—Would he last year have got a labourer for eight pice?

A.—Yes, still cheaper.

Q.—Did employers get labour for agricultural purposes cheaper in the rains last year than in ordinary years?

A.—No; not cheaper in the rains.

Q.—Why?

A.—Because the kitchen relief was a sort of check.

Q.—The existence of kitchens did to a certain extent raise the wages of labour?

A.—It checked the tendency of *mālyuzārs* to take advantage of cheap labour.

Q.—The rains went on and there was a certain amount of sickness, a good deal of cholera: to what do you attribute that? Do you attribute it to anything in the way of bad food or bad water or exposure?

A.—In the hot season people had worked in the sun and their systems had become low. When they returned to their homes they found they had to live upon one sort of food. In ordinary years they eat food of various sorts.

Q.—And that would bring on a good deal of sickness do you think?

A.—Yes; it is very probable.

Q.—Did it ever come to your notice that grain-sellers brought out bad grain for sale?

A.—No; it did not come to my notice. There was a great deal of rice imported from Bengal: there were some complaints of bad rice.

Q.—Did the people like the Bengal rice?

A.—They did not care for it if they could get anything else.

Q.—I infer from your replies to the printed questions that you are more in favour of village works than large public works?

A.—Yes; but they would not provide work for all. So there should be large public works also.

Q.—Do you think if you were again called upon to work famine relief, which I hope may not be the case, village works of general utility for the villages could be largely constructed?

A.—I think so in some parts.

Q.—What character of works?

A.—Tanks in Bhandara and other rice-producing districts.

Q.—Wells also?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is cultivation by wells much carried on in your villages?

A.—In some it is.

Q.—Do you make *pakka* wells?

A.—Yes.

Q.—At what depth under the surface is water in Bhandara?

A.—40 feet.

Q.—What would it cost to make a well of 40 feet?

A.—From Rs. 250 to Rs. 300.

Q.—And how many acres would such a well irrigate?

A.—Two acres ordinarily.

Q.—Are *zamindars* in the habit of making advances to tenants for constructing such wells?

A.—Yes, when they can afford it.

Q.—On interest?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Does the interest take the form of increased rent?

A.—No, never.

Q.—Do you think any large number of wells would be constructed if *tagavi* were given?

A.—There is one consideration. People are afraid where land is irrigated that their assessments will go up very high. This consideration deters them from building wells.

Q.—If there were a public assurance that no improvement of that sort would be taxed, at all events until the whole cost of the improvement was recovered, would that diminish their dislike to make wells, and would it cause a great increase in well-making?

A.—Yes; I think so.

Q.—Speaking for yourself as a large landholder, if such a promise was given, would you be disposed at once to invest money in well-making for the protection of your tenants' crops?

A.—Yes; I would.

Q.—Suppose you have a holding of 50 acres that is paying Rs. 2 per acre. The assessment is made on the basis of Rs. 2. After the assessment you make a well. Then the assessment falls in 20 years afterwards. Would you have any objection to the rate of the whole estate being enhanced from Rs. 2 to Rs. 2-2-0 or Rs. 2-4-0 or whatever it may be, or would you wish that no special regard should be paid to the well?

A.—No special regard should be paid to the well.

Q.—Do the tenants rely upon their *soukars* to carry them over from one crop to another?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is that the rule or the exception?

A.—It is the rule.

Q.—Do the *soukars* finance them in regard to such matters as buying bullocks, or are they independent?

A.—They generally borrow the money.

Q.—Does each man do it on his own responsibility, or do the tenants of the entire village act jointly?

A.—Each man on his own responsibility.

Q.—The joint system is never made use of?

A.—No.

Q.—We have been told by witnesses that money was advanced during the present year by Government on the joint responsibility of the tenants of villages?

A.—I don't know about that. In my villages it was not the case.

Q.—We have been told that tenants join together and borrow *tagavi* from Government on their joint responsibility?

A.—These instances must have been few.

Q.—Why do you say that? Is the feeling against joint responsibility strong in the Province?

A.—I think the feeling is not for joint responsibility.

Q.—Is anything like borrowing on joint responsibility opposed by *soukars*?

A.—No.

Q.—Would not credit be better in the case of joint responsibility?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Then why do you say the feeling is against it?

A.—I take it as it is.

Q.—If joint responsibility would make for the security of the lender, why should public feeling be against it?

A.—The industrious would fear that they would suffer for the fault of the indolent.

Q.—But in the case of joint responsibility, the industrious would take good care to keep the indolent up to the collar. Do you think that such a system of getting money on joint responsibility, whereby the amount of interest would be much less than is usually paid, would be acceptable as an experiment?

A.—I think it should be tried.

Q.—It would not interfere with the *soukars*, because the objects would be merely agricultural to secure the growth of the crops and bring them to the market; such objects as buying cattle, making wells, &c., and if the things bought with such loans were secured from attachment for the ordinary debts of the tenant, the result would be that the lender's lien would be enormously improved and the interest also would be greatly reduced?

A.—I should like it.

Q.—You are one of the leaders of society in this part of the Central Provinces. Would you before we leave the Province get your friends of the Nagpur Division together, and see whether you could not establish a system of that sort? We will give you every assistance.

A.—I will first have to know what assistance they may expect from Government.

Q.—It is not so much from Government. If Government steps in, you will be immediately suspicious and fancy the thing is done with some ulterior object.

A.—The people know that Government is against the *soukars*.

Q.—There is no such feeling against them. If the books of a *soukār* are examined, it will be found that he does not make 9 per cent. He has a number of bad debts. So there is no feeling of hostility against them on the part of Government: this plan will not interfere necessarily with the business of the *soukār*; it would be a matter of interest only to the tenant and to the landlord. Government won't benefit except in so far as the tenant and the landlord do.

A.—I should like to know some more particulars.

Q.—Well, I cannot say anything more just now.

Mr. Nicholson.—Was there any difficulty in getting seed for grain?

A.—Yes.

Q.—It is difficult for individuals to procure petty quantities of grain, is it not?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Consequently if there were such associations as were spoken of who could procure large quantities, the thing could be done more easily and cheaply?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In one of your answers you refer to private agencies being employed for charitable relief. Can you give any idea of how you would develop private relief in future?

A.—It would require some consideration.

Q.—Do you know any cases in which the *panchāyet* carried out village works or supervised the carrying out of village works?

A.—Not in my village. The more intelligent of the tenants generally helped the *mālguzār's* agent in pointing out useful works.

Q.—Do you think the educated members of the *mālguzār's* family could be called upon to take up village relief? Would they do it gratuitously?

A.—It depends upon their solvency. If they were well off, they might; if they were not well off, they could not.

Q.—In the matter of suspensions of revenue, can you tell us what steps were taken that the fact of the amount of suspensions should be brought to the notice of those who would be benefited by them?

A.—This year no special action was required.

Q.—Who ordinarily does bring it to notice?

A.—The *patwāris*.

Q.—What steps were taken to ensure that the *patwāris* did do that?

A.—I don't know.

Q.—What I want to know is whether money was collected in any instances, although it had been suspended?

A.—I don't know.

Mr. Bourdillon.—You said you imported Bengal rice for seed? Was this done generally throughout the Province?

A.—As far as Bhandara is concerned, it was done.

Q.—Has the germination proved successful?

A.—Yes; on land which could be irrigated. It failed totally in land which could not be irrigated.

The President.—What is the average rate of rent?

A.—It depends upon the character of the soil.

Q.—What is the maximum rate of rent?

A.—On irrigated land Rs. 5 to Rs. 6 per acre. On unirrigated land between Re. 1 and Rs. 3. In Chanda it is something less.

Q.—Your figures are for the Bhandara district?

A.—Bhandara and Nagpur.

Q.—What does irrigated land grow?

A.—Sugarcane ordinarily.

Q.—Does it grow cotton?

A.—No; chillies and garden crops generally.

Q.—What does unirrigated land grow?

A.—Common cereals.

Q.—Does it grow cotton?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What proportion of the Re. 1 to Rs. 3 land is grown with cotton and what with cereals?

A.—I believe in the Katol tahsil the proportion of cereal land to cotton land is 2 to 3 ordinarily.

Q.—Is half the unirrigated land taken up with cotton on your estates?

2 A.—More than that.

Q.—About 75 per cent.?

A.—Yes.

3 Q.—We have been told that in an average year the yield of cotton is Rs. 35.

A.—Yes.

Rs. 30, taking *karbi* into account?

4 A.—I would say Rs. 20 or Rs. 22.

Q.—Well, then, you have some fodder in addition. From an acre of *juār* would there be 10 maunds?

5 A.—Yes.

- 6 Q.—What does *juár* sell at in an average year?  
 A.—Rs. 6 to Rs. 7 per *khandi*.  
 Q.—What is a *khandi*?  
 A.—400lbs.  
 Q.—Do you mean to say that you get a maund of *juár* for Re. 1-6-0?  
 A.—Yes.  
 Q.—That is very cheap?  
 A.—Yes; *juár* is very cheap in ordinary years.  
 Q.—I am surprised you don't make use of the railway and send some North. You say Rs. 20 to Rs. 22 is your income from an acre of cereal land. Does that include the double crop? You sometimes also get the *rabi* crop on the same land?  
 7 A.—I refer to one crop only.  
 Q.—If it does bear an additional crop, it will be more?  
 8 A.—It will be about Rs. 30.  
 Q.—And the rent of such land is Rs. 1 to Rs. 3 per acre?  
 9 A.—Yes.  
 Q.—That is to say the rent is about 6 to 7 per cent. of the gross produce?  
 A.—Yes.  
 Q.—Garden crops are more valuable?  
 A.—Yes. Rent bears a much smaller proportion to the gross produce there.  
 Q.—Then your rent is, if anything, less than 6 to 7 per cent. of the gross produce. What proportion of rent is taken as revenue?  
 A.—75 per cent.  
 Q.—75 per cent is taken as revenue?  
 A.—I mean 75 per cent. of the actual rental.  
 Q.—This includes cesses. As regards revenue, you have a limit of 60 per cent?  
 A.—Yes.  
 Q.—Taking your revenue at 60 per cent.?  
 A.—In some cases it is 65 per cent.  
 Q.—But generally it is 60 per cent. The Government revenue falls at 4 per cent. of the gross produce on a moderate estimate of that produce. Is that excessive?  
 10 A.—It depends upon collections. Some of the rental is not collected.

[The witness subsequently wrote :—]

I find that in my replies to questions put to me by the President, I seem to have understated rent, which is in some cases more than Rs. 3 for unirrigated lands and more than Rs. 6 for irrigated ones. In giving my estimate of yield per acre of cotton and other cereals, I should have pointed out that yield varies with soils. For instance, if an acre of land in the Katol tahsil of the Nagpur district gives an yield of 2 or 2½ *khandies* of *juár*, in the Murer tahsil or in the Bhandara district it is never more than 1½ or 1½ *khandi*. I thus request that my replies cannot be said to apply to all lands in the Nagpur and Bhandara districts. Then, again, estimates depend very much on prices. In my answers I seem to have estimated my yield on prices that ruled during the last few years excepting some months in the year 1898 when prices went down very much. These years are said to be famine years, and if this is granted, my estimates cannot be said to represent yield of ordinary or average years, as the average yield of cotton is about 10 maunds (Rs. 30) and 1½ *khandies* of *juár* (Rs. 12 or 13). The ordinary price of *juár* is from Rs. 6 to 9, whereas in the years 1897, 1899 and 1900 its price fluctuated between Rs. 13 to Rs. 18 per *khandi* (400lbs).

I may be permitted to add that whether rent is excessive or not does not depend upon gross produce, but upon net produce that is left to the tenant after necessary cultivation expenses. With all these deductions on account of expenditure, interest and rent, the margin left to the tenant is very little indeed.

The witness also made the following additions to his evidence at the places indicated :—

1. The words "a meal."
2. The word "sometimes."
3. The words "if the seed is good."
4. "If the prices are as good as ruled during the last 3 or 4 years excepting some months in 1898."
5. "In very good and well-manured soil."
6. "In the villages. This was in an ordinary year. But latterly in these famine years, especially the last year, the price was Rs. 14 to Rs. 18 per *khandi*."
7. "And a year of ordinarily good prices."
8. "This also refers to times when prices are good and high."
9. "Sometimes more."
10. "And the expenditure has to be taken into account."



Answers by ~~Mr. G. M. CHITNAVIS~~ Mr. G. M. CHITNAVIS, C. I. E., President of the Nagpur City Municipal Committee, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

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My experience of famine operations is limited to work done in this connection by the Municipality and the District Council and to what has been done by myself individually as a landholder in my own villages. I have thus tried to answer in the form of a note only such questions which I thought I could satisfactorily answer from my personal knowledge and experience.

Q. 1 and 2.—As regards the first two questions, I beg to state that in June 1899 the outlook was good, the rains were copious, and the monsoon seemed to have begun well. The Hindu astrologers foretold that it would be a bad year, while the Marwaris in the city had many of them closed business some time since to escape the vicissitudes and calamities of the year. When, however, rains fell copiously in June, I once remember to have told the Commissioner that there was every likelihood of the prediction being falsified; but, alas, only a month afterwards it was found that the rains had suddenly stopped and that too for the whole year. The kharif crops which preceded the famine year 1900 was normal, but rabi had altogether failed. The character of the harvest in the two preceding years had not, however, been such as to enable people to recover from the shock of the famine of 1897 and the two years which preceded it. What has been the general character of the seasons can be estimated from the fact that whereas the area under crop in 17 districts of the Central Provinces in 1893-94 was 15,684,165 acres, it was 14,607,767 in 1898-99. But despite these unfavourable circumstances of indifferent harvest and shrinkage of cropped area, the landholders were not backward in meeting their liabilities to the State. The demand including cesses in 1897-98 was about 90 lakhs on current and 38 lakhs on arrears account, while they paid over 94 lakhs during the year including arrears. The collections during 1898-99 have been about Rs. 99,93,000, which is about 5½ lakhs more than the previous year. After meeting these and other private liabilities the agriculturists, who represent a population, according to the Census of 1891, 6,347 out of every 10,000 of the total population, could not have begun the famine year with any appreciable savings. Thus, following upon several years of scarcity and one of acute famine, the year 1899-1900 found hungry millions in absolute want and destitution, but found the Administration fully alive to its responsibilities and keenly on the watch to set in motion machinery of famine relief perfected in all its details. It is thus no exaggeration when it is said that in the Central Provinces, in spite of the extreme acuteness of the famine, there was no death from starvation.

Q. 6 to 18.—As far as the Nagpur Municipality was concerned, the Municipality was not obliged this year, as in 1897, to open works in the city for the relief of the poor. In 1897 the large influx of emaciated people from the rice-districts of Bhandara and Balaghat, and the sudden rise in prices, and riots that accompanied such rise, made it incumbent upon the Municipality to begin earthwork and find labour for the poor in the city at least until Government was in a position to complete their relief programme. Last year, however, relief-works had begun in time both in the district and the city, and the Municipality was not required to start any such works as they did in 1897. The Koshtis were relieved by means of advances, which the better class among them received from the weavers' shop for the employment of the poorer people of their class, and there was also a cheap grain shop started with a view to relieve the condition of the middle class people who could not afford to purchase for their large families grain at the prices at which it had then been sold. The necessity of such a shop, however, disappeared in about a month, as prices went down on account of the very large grain that then continued to be imported into the city, and also because the very small relief which that shop afforded was not appreciated by the people themselves. So long, however, as the cheap grain shop existed, the task allowed to the Municipality was to issue passes to people who applied for this form of relief after ascertaining what their income was, the prescribed limit of income for a family deserving of such relief being Rs. 2 per head per mensem.

The Municipality had, however, to arrange for increased water-provision in the city on account of threatened failure of supply in the Ambajheri reservoir, and this they did by spending about Rs. 5,000 in improving the water-supply of the city, by deepening wells, by re-digging some, and inducing the people to dig others. About 700 wells were thus cleaned, re-opened, and newly sunk. The general depth of wells in the city below the surface of water on the cessation of the rains of 1899 varied according to the nature of the soil where these wells happened to be and their distance from the adjoining nalas or tanks. The scanty rainfall of the year which came to about 13 inches, as compared with an average rainfall of 45 inches of the preceding years, resulted in many of the wells in the city running dry in the hot weather, and necessitated their being dug at a lower level than 30 or 35 feet in the ground.

On account of the weavers' shop and many relief works close to the city no signs of emaciation or of starvation were to be seen among the city people until June. It was, however, in the month of June after the large works near the city were closed, that people were found roaming about in the streets in half-starved condition and in want of food. The Municipality then found it necessary to represent to Government the necessity of opening a kitchen for the city people. A kitchen was forthwith opened and though arrangements for supply of grain, &c., were made by the Tahsildar, the kitchen was supervised and controlled by the Municipality under instructions from the Deputy Commissioner. Admission to the kitchen was restricted and limited only to such people as were really in need of relief and were after careful enquiry recommended for admission by the ward member of the Municipality. The establishment of a kitchen conduced to keep in ordinary health many who would have otherwise starved and become in course of time quite unfit for any sort of relief. This system brought in the kitchen semi-able-bodied people who were taking advantage of kitchen relief and yet were quite able to be put on light labour. It was thus thought necessary to utilize such labour in getting some work done. The Committee thus resolved to put all such men on earthwork connected with reclamation of the portion of the Juma Tank and its slopes, by supplementing the uncooked kitchen dole they received by an additional wage of half an anna from Municipal Funds. The Government, however, in view of the depressed condition of Municipal finances arising out of a large unexpected expenditure on plague, was good enough to relieve the Municipality of this additional expenditure by agreeing to open the earthwork proposed by them at their own expense. This work was treated as a famine work on the B list principle, and was managed by the Health Officer of the Municipality under my immediate instructions, admission to it being strictly restricted to persons who were admitted into the kitchen and found tolerably able to work. The great necessity of a kitchen was gauged by this very important test that classes who were hitherto careful not to eat food cooked by people, other than those from whose hands they were used to do, left off all their scruples and took advantage of the kitchen doles, unmindful of the fact that the food there was cooked by ordinary Kunbis. The majority of the people who attended the kitchen were Koshtis and Muhammadaus; a few of them were Mahars.

As this work was managed by the Municipal staff, I take this opportunity to solve some of the questions connected with relief administered by means of large public works. At ordinary times the wage is 3 annas for a mate and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  annas for a female cooly. This is the rate when food-grain is at ordinary rates. The wage given by the Municipality in carrying out the work was 2 annas for a digger and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  annas for a carrier. Children from 8 to 12 generally got 3 pice. This rate with food-grain at double the ordinary rate is certainly not too high. Answering question 30, I beg to say that the classification of people into diggers and carriers, irrespective of sex, presented no difficulty. Men who carried wanted to be diggers in spite of their inability to dig on account of the high wage the diggers received, but when rejected they were content to receive the carrier's wage with women who carried. No semi-able-bodied male held back because he was to get the same wage as a female, both doing the same work. Answering question 34, I beg to say that the scale of wages was just adequate and certainly not unduly liberal. People could not have lived on anything less than what they got. Even the above scale of wages was hardly sufficient to maintain a family. The workers could not have saved anything. Even where a man had a large family of women and children, and they all worked and earned by their joint earnings, he hardly maintained his family in health even by means of doing their cooking on the joint family system. They could hardly save anything as a sort of reserve to enable them to pull on until they found labour elsewhere. We closed work on the 15th November 1900. From 25th October, i.e., 20 days previous to our closing, we began giving a minimum wage of 7 pice to diggers and 5 pice to carriers. This had the effect of reducing the number for two or 3 days, but soon afterwards the number exceeded what it was before the minimum wage was introduced. Even when the works were closed on the 15th of November the people were in want of work in the city.

As far as the District Council is concerned, it was required to take no initiative in the matter as the District authorities had carefully planned their programme and left nothing to be done by the Council, who even if they had been required to help financially, would have found it difficult to do so on account of the expected fall in receipts from several cesses which form the main basis of their income. They thus confined their operations to improvement of water-supply in places where it was expected to fail. With this view they resolved to dig wells both on the road-side and in the villages where any deficiency was apprehended. These road-side wells were found to be of great use to people who carried grain in the interior during the hot months of the year. I herewith append a copy of a resolution which was passed by the Council in connection with the construction of these wells.

While speaking on the subject of wells I cannot but state that the malguzars as a body, though sorely pressed themselves, have done more than their duty towards the tenants by improving the water-supply in their villages, and by helping Government in the management of kitchens and other relief. I must not omit to mention that some of them could not have rendered this help to their tenants unless they had been largely reinforced by timely loans, without interest, from Government.



As regards village works, I feel it my duty to say that these are the works which ought to be largely extended in times of famine. This was done as far as practicable during this famine, and they proved to be the salvation of many village people. If this had not been done in the rains where ordinary relief-work could not be kept going, thousands would have died. All that Government had done up to the end of May would have gone for nothing if people had been left alone during the rains. Village works largely helped both malguzars and tenants, the two classes whom famine severely touched. They benefit permanently the land which supplies them with funds and enables them to pay their revenue. People don't cheat Government in regard to these works, but work honestly and do a good day's work. I further recommend that these works should be done under the immediate control of the malguzar, who suffers much more in such times than even the tenants. Such village works not only help him by improving his land, but they enable him to keep him in touch with his people, and secure his influence by making him the means of distribution of relief among his tenants. Being connected with the village, having interest in it, and remaining under greater dread of the superintending officers than the clever ministerial officers who are brought from outside, he knows what sort of relief-work is essentially necessary for the village and where relief ought to be given, while such relief materially benefits the village inhabitants from whom the bulk of the Government revenue is realized. Tanks are the sort of village works which must most largely be done as was the case this time. They are of much greater use than roads, which are often neglected for want of funds after they are made by famine labour. Weeding, &c., of fields, as was resorted to during the late famine, did much good, for people had no money and crops would have been spoiled had free labour not been placed at their disposal. Even now, after all the help that has been given by Government on account of exhaustion of resources, it has been found difficult to grow a full rice crop. As regards suspensions and remissions, Government has done what it could possibly do. As a landholder answering this question, I would recommend remissions, not suspensions, though the former make the malguzar a loser along with the Government. Suspensions hang like a dead weight and discourage people. They do more harm than good, for they have to be paid after they accumulate, while their collection cannot as easily be evaded as the dues of an ordinary sowcar. It has also the effect of accelerating transfer which Government have been trying to stop by legislative measures. Remissions should not be ordered on an estimate of reputed ability to pay, as that is likely to lead to abuse and inquisitorial enquiry. They should be given from an estimate of the condition of the crop of a particular area.

Q. 60 and 61.—There are some aboriginal tribes in the tahsil of Ramtek. Forests were opened out for them and mahua, bamboo seed and other edible forest produce served them largely for their maintenance.

Q. 62.—Yes, on the rains. This was very necessary. Able-bodied people who had been obliged to resort to kitchens for want of labour were sent to work in the fields of such poor tenants as were not able to spend money for purposes of weeding, &c., and had not sufficient number of family members to work for them. The period they were so engaged depended upon the nature and extent of the work they had to do. But the Charge Officer and his subordinates were careful to see full work was exacted from them by utilizing their services for other poorer tenants when one had been so served. Their services were generally utilized in the weeding of jua and rice and proved to be most useful.

Q. 63.—The weavers' shop in Nagpur was an attempt to relieve Koshtis and Momins in their own craft.

Q. 64.—In the weavers' shop they gave money to well-to-do middlemen who were held responsible for payments to the poorer of their class. It so happened that these middlemen advanced money to those who had credit, while people who had no credit suffered. Such people were taken to work on the Juma Tank earthwork. For some time a metal-breaking camp was kept on at Boregaon in order to enable city people to take advantage of that work, but the Koshtis took unkindly to it on account of the broken condition in which they found themselves, consequent on insufficient food. Special relief in their own trade was quite necessary in case of the Nagpur and Umrer weavers, who generally weave fine cloth and are not used to manual labour as others.

Q. 65.—I believe the weavers' relief shop was useful, inasmuch as it helped to relieve weak, conservative people who would otherwise have had to do ordinary labour at great inconvenience and risk to their life. This relief to weavers entails no loss on Government as cloth made by these weavers will be sold at proper prices.

Q. 66.—Grass was cut from Government forests, and grass and fodder stored up in places to help cattle of distressed agriculturists.

Q. 67.—There was no scarcity of fodder in Nagpur, but on account of the cheapness of the price, the Municipality of Nagpur purchased some bales of compressed grass for municipal bullocks. I don't know if this grass was taken to affected parts.

Q. 78 to 80.—Has been given in my note, where I described the city kitchen as it was administered by the Municipality. As regards question 81, my experience went to show that grain shops in no way discouraged the importation of grain, nor did they affect general prices, the reason being that their benefit was restricted to a few chosen people only, who could not be expected to consume any large quantity of grain.

Q. 82.—The kharif kist was partly suspended and partly collected. The whole of the 2nd rabi kist was suspended.

Q. 83.—These suspensions were based upon crop failure solely.

Q. 86.—In my opinion, as far as the famine year was concerned, sufficient relief by suspension was given, but there will be suffering in case this suspended revenue is ordered to be collected, more so, when rabi this year too shows signs of failure, and the rice area has been much contracted, and also because there has been much exhaustion of resources since the last six years.

Q. 87.—The number far exceeded 15 per cent. of the population affected. The reason is plain. Distress was extremely severe. Classes that were hitherto all right were rendered bankrupt and they had to go to relief to save life; caste prejudice disappeared; when all were in the same condition there was nobody to outcaste.

Q. 88.—It was adequate and never excessive.

Q. 89.—Even well-to-do cultivators and artizans who were once well-to-do had to go to relief. They included some holders of small proprietary shares, many occupancy and other tenants. Proprietors who were ashamed to go have run knee-deep into debt, and have exhausted all their resources.

Q. 90.—Yes, more ready because they had known to trust the officers of Government owing to their experience of last famine and were also hard-pressed.

Q. 91.—No. People had no credit left. Those that had did not go to relief. The restriction of the right of transfer also drove many to relief-works, and the sowcars also had no money to give. Had there been no restriction of the right of transfer, I believe little more land would have been under the plough than it now is. The Charitable Fund and takavi have, however, done much to enable people to sow.

Q. 103.—The Fund was managed in the manner described in the Famine Commission's Report, and the system worked admirably.

Q. 104.—Yes, owing to block of traffic, Bengal rice could not come fast enough to Nagpur, and prices rose for some time. Such intervals were however not many.

Q. 105.—None. The wage given in relief-works was not such as to induce people to leave their homes, if they could get private employment in their own and adjoining villages. Once when the earthwork on the Juma Tank was in progress, the Manager, Empress Mills, who is constructing a new mill, reported to me that his contractors complained that there was difficulty in getting people to work for the mill. I wrote to them that if they paid the same rate as we paid, we would be able to send as many labourers as he wanted. There was no reply. The fact probably is that the contractors must have thought of benefiting themselves by the famine times that prevailed by insisting upon labourers to work at much lower wage than what we paid them.

Q. 106.—On account of want of other seed, cotton seed, which was plentiful, was sown even in places where cotton was never sown, while broadcast rice took the place of transplanted rice. The result was that for want of necessary funds to do weeding, &c., and timely rain, broadcast rice to a large extent failed.

Q. 107.—Cash wages have not risen in sympathy with the rise in prices, as labour was abundant.

Q. 110.—Private agency was employed for charitable relief. In superintending kitchens, the malguzars and Missionary agency was the most useful in these and many other matters.

NAGPUR :

The 8th January 1901. }

G. M. CHITNAVIS,

President, City Municipal.

Enclosure to the answers given by Mr. G. M. CHITNAVIS, C. I. E., President of the  
Nagpur City Municipal Committee, to questions drawn up by the Famine  
Commission.

*Proceedings of a Meeting of the Nagpur District Council, held at the Nagpur  
Town Hall on Saturday, the 24th February 1900.*

1. With reference to Resolution No. 2, dated 27th January 1900, read proposals from the Presidents of the four Local Boards in connection with the water-supply arrangements intended to meet water famine in the district, *i. e.*, on roadsides, in places where bazars are held, and in villages badly off for want of water.

In connection with the above, the President pointed out that the funds at the disposal of the Council were insufficient to meet all those urgent demands, and that the Local Board Presidents be therefore requested to make arrangements for wells only on roadsides and in places where bazars are held, by making advances to malguzars or other well-to-do people willing to undertake and execute works cheaply and expeditiously, according to the following scheme :—

Nature of work.	Maximum contri- bution by the Council.
(a). ON ROADSIDES.	
1. Temporary wells in the beds of rivers and nallas ... ..	Rs. 20 each.
2. Temporary wells in places where the surface water is not deep ... ..	50 do.
3. Temporary wells in places where the surface water is deep ... ..	100 do.
4. Repairs to the existing wells ... ..	40 do.
5. Deepening existing wells ... ..	50 do.
9. Pucca wells in places (2) and (3) on condition of half the amount being contributed in cash or in shape of materials and labour to that extent ... ..	250 do.
(b). PLACES WHERE BAZARS ARE HELD.	
1. Pucca wells where want of water is greatly felt ... ..	250 do.
2. Repairs to existing wells ... ..	40 do.
3. Deepening existing wells ... ..	50 do.

NOTE.—Efforts should be made to obtain contributions from malguzars and village people in cash or in shape of materials or labour towards the construction of wells, which should, as far as possible, be sunk in the vicinity of villages on roads.

*Resolution.*—(1) That the proposals of the President, District Council, be approved. (2) That as the total cost required for the works proposed would approximately amount to Rs. 16,000; Rs. 6,000 be made available from the District Fund, and the balance met from Provincial contribution. (3) That with a view to enable the Presidents of Local Boards to carry out without delay the scheme, an advance of Rs. 1,500 be for the present made to each of them. (4) That the works be left entirely in the hands of the several Presidents to be executed by them in the way they think best and cheapest. (5) That with a view to expedite works, ordinary formalities of estimates, &c., be dispensed with, and after the completion of the works accounts of expenditure thereof be submitted to this office along with a certificate as to the manner in which the works have been executed and completed. (6) That with a view to enable Council to make Rs. 6,000 available for the purpose, all new works proposed to be executed during the ensuing year be stopped, and the necessary sanction be obtained to the re-appropriation of the funds after the close of this financial year. (7) That representation be submitted to the Local Government, through the Deputy Commissioner, praying for a grant of Rs. 10,000 from Provincial funds to supplement the contribution made by the Council as herein resolved, in order to enable them to carry out the scheme in its entirety.



### VILLAGE RELIEF THROUGH KITCHENS.

Large expansion of village relief during the rains was an absolute necessity. Without it there would have been heavy mortality and all the money Government had spent to keep the people alive through the winter and the hot seasons would have gone for nothing; for owing to the exceptionally severe character of the famine the people were very much broken down and had not much resources left. Their resources, whatever they were, were at their lowest ebb at the opening of the rains, and this was just the time when they were most in need of help. Ordinary occupations in a village which are interrupted during a famine are not all at once re-opened on the first fall of the monsoon rain. A demand for labour, no doubt, comes into existence under the head of field operations, but it, by no means, attains the ordinary standard. This contraction for ordinary demand of labour was a specially marked feature of the present famine, for except the few well-to-do landholders and cultivators of superior class, the employers of agricultural labour were themselves hard pressed and in consequence were driven to perform much of the field work themselves, while at ordinary times they get it done by hired labour. Even the well-to-do had to reduce their field establishment. Thus, if matters had been left to take their own course and vigorous measures not adopted to give relief to the people in their homes during the rains, famine-relief operations would not have attained the success they did. To make the people work in private fields in return for relief given from State funds was a most happy expedient to exact some return for the help given. Moreover, the whole village community was thus made to take an active interest in the proper distribution of relief. This mode of relief may be dispensed with in an ordinary year of scarcity, but a famine of the character we had could not otherwise have been successfully grappled. This again served in a large measure as a check over the tendency of such malguzars and tenants as may have hoped to take advantage of famine labour at uncommonly cheap rates at the cost of stint and suffering to people who were driven to labour for bare subsistence.

NAGPUR :

*The 10th January 1901.*

G. M. CHITNAVIS.



SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE OF ASSISTANT SURGEON N. L.  
BASSAK, CIVIL MEDICAL OFFICER, WARDHA.

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PRISONERS were below par in January : when I went out in camp in January some people in the villages were emaciated.

Cholera broke out in April. This was partly due to bad water-supply : also there was an increase of mortality from bowel-complaints and fever. Infant mortality was rising. I attribute this partly to famine causes. But climatic conditions contributed and well-to-do persons also suffered.

In April one-third of the deaths was due to cholera ; about one-fifth of the remainder was due to causes connected with famine, but not to insufficient relief. I never saw famine fever.

From August there was an enormous mortality from bowel-complaints and fever.

Bowel-complaints always prevail in the rains ; but the condition of the people was low in 1899.

Deaths in relief camps and at kitchens were very few.

By December 1900 the mortality was fairly normal. The fall in the death-rate began in October.

The grain sold on the works and the food at kitchens was generally good. In villages bad grain was sometimes offered for sale as the time progressed and the lower layers of the grain-pits were reached. I say this from personal experience. Some 30 samples were sent to me. But inferior grain affected the death-rate in only a small percentage of cases.

The imported rice was not a cause of mortality.





Answers by Dr. NRITYA LAL BYSACK, Civil Medical Officer, Wardha, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

Q. 3.—(a) 40 inches, (b) 12·81 inches, or about 32 per cent. of the average, (c) 13th September, (d) as given below:—

Month.		Rainfall in 1899.	Average rainfall.
June	...	2·35	9·68
July	...	1·24	10·83
August	...	5·41	10·28
September	...	3·81	5·86

Q. 71.—None.

Q. 74.—(a) 121, (b) 152.

Q. 75.—Khichri of rice or juari and dal, occasionally, on the following scale:—

Uncooked food.			
Adults (over 14)	...	...	9 chittaks.
Children 10 to 14	...	...	7½ do.
Do. 7 to 10	...	...	5 do.
Do. 4 to 7	...	...	3½ do.
Do. up to 4	...	...	2 do.

*Condiments—*

Salt	...	24 chittaks.	} per 100 persons.
Chhillies	...	5 do.	
Oil	...	8 do.	
Haldi	...	2 do.	

Onions and green vegetables.

Two meals—one in the morning between 10 and 11 A. M. and the second in the evening between 5 and 6 P. M. People were fed on the premises except at the time of heavy rains and when there was no sufficient accommodation.

The food was sent away also to those that were too ill or too feeble to attend the kitchens. In few exceptional cases, on account of superior caste, the people were allowed food uncooked, to be cooked by themselves.

All remnants of food were allowed to be taken away by the people themselves.

Q. 94.—Vital statistics are collected by the village kotwars to the malguzars. From the kotwar's books the entries are copied in the police registers. The registers in some villages are inspected and checked by the Civil Surgeons, Revenue Officers and Police Officers when on tour.

Native Superintendent of Vaccination makes house-to-house enquiry to discover births and deaths that may have been omitted by the kotwars.

In municipal towns, the registration is compulsory, and the persons failing to report births and deaths are prosecuted.

Q. 95.—The staple article of food in the Wardha district is juari; but as the crops failed in 1899, a sufficient quantity of juari was not available for the people and consequently most of the people had to subsist on imported Bengal rice. The quality of rice was

found to be good, and in no instance bad rice was brought to my notice. But this rice is of *Usna* variety and not so digestible as the *Alooa* variety. As the people were not accustomed to this diet, they became more prone to bowel-complaints by living on this rice.

Besides this, very old *juari* was removed from *paos* (underground bins) and brought to the market for sale. Some of these were quite unfit for human consumption, but all the same they were bought and eaten as the price was lower than the food-grains. Some thirty samples of *juari* were sent for my examination by the Police from different parts of the district at different times, and I condemned them all as unfit for human food.

On account of scarcity of fodder and drinking water, a large number of cattle that remained in the district died. The flesh of these dead cattle was greedily eaten by the low-caste people and was stored in a semi-dried and semi-rotten state for future use. So this was another cause of bowel-complaints.

On account of high prices of food-grains, the people were obliged to pinch themselves more or less, and had to substitute inferior articles of food which may not be very digestible or nutritious, but can satisfy the hunger. This made the health of the people below par and consequently ill-fitted them to withstand onset of any disease.

Q. 96.—On account of deficient rainfall in 1899, all the water-courses became almost dry, with the exception of stinking pools here and there. These became the sources of water-supply practically for all the purposes to the people living in the villages near rivers.

The wells with few exceptions yielded only a scanty supply of muddy water, hardly sufficient for drinking purposes. In some places in the district, this scanty supply of water was to be brought from a distance of two or three miles. When the rains set in, the people had to drink turbid water. This bad drinking water was a fruitful source of increased mortality.

The following measures were adopted to extend or improve the water-supply:—

*Jhiras* were sunk in river beds where there were no wells for drinking water, and wells were deepened.

In some places Police had placed guards on the river so that its water may not be used for any purpose except watering cattle.

Potassium permanganate was used in disinfecting the wells in villages and the people were dissuaded from using river water. All the wells in the towns were regularly disinfected every day during the time cholera was prevailing, and I personally supervised the disinfection of clear water reservoir of the "Fraser Water-works" at Wardha with potassium permanganate every day.

Potassium permanganate was freely supplied to the Police and Famine Charge Officers, Public Works Department, to disinfect the wells in villages, and the wells where cholera broke out were disinfected at intervals of a week.

Q. 97.—The following special sanitary arrangements were made:—

(a) On works (Public Works Department). The wells were guarded from contamination for some days to keep the water-supply pure before a work is started. Some good caste men, who can be trusted to attend to the business, were made foremen of the water arrangements, and they had a sufficient number of Brahman and Kahar mates, water-carriers and distributors under them. At places *piaos* were established at short distances. Strict precautions were taken to preserve the purity of water in the course of distribution. Every effort was made to minimise the chances of contamination by effecting the distribution by as few persons as possible, and by avoiding hand-to-hand distribution. All water was stored and conveyed in iron vessels fitted with covers and taps for drawing.

Special huts were erected for contagious diseases at a distance from the General Hospital.

The trenches selected and marked out by flags were 400 yards from the camp away from the water-supply.

The sanitary arrangements made were sufficient.

The Deputy Commissioner, Assistant and Extra-Assistant Commissioners, Sub-Divisional Officer, Famine Works Superintendent, Civil Medical Officer, and Inspecting Medical Officer, Famine Relief Works, supervised these arrangements.

Q. 98.—The quality of grains on Public Works Department works was regularly inspected and found good, excepting a few instances in which lakhori dal was found and condemned.

In bazar the inferior grains were sent to the Civil Surgeon for examination by the Police, and those declared unwholesome were destroyed.

Q. 99.—In the rainy season, the people began to eat large quantities of indigestible vegetables, such as ambari (*Hibbiscus cannabinus*) and tarota (*Cassia auriculata*) which induced bowel-complaints.

Q. 100.—There was immigration from Berar and Chanda, but what percentage I cannot say.

Q. 101.—No statistics can be made out as the immigrants generally did not give out that they were such.

WARDHA :  
The 4th January 1901. }

NRITYA LAL <sup>a</sup>BY SACK,  
Civil Medical Officer,  
Wardha.



MR. G. G. WHITE, EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, JUBBULPORE DIVISION.

*The President.*—What district do you represent, Mr. White ?

A.—Jubbulpore, Mandla, and Seoni.

Q.—Are you Executive Engineer of these three districts ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Had you a District Officer or a District Sub-Divisional Officer for each district ?

A.—I had a Sub-Divisional Officer for each district.

Q.—Did you begin operations in October ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Had you at that time a programme of works out and located ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—For each district ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Had you estimates ready prepared ?

A.—Yes ; lump sum estimates.

Q.—No details ?

A.—No.

Q.—I understood from other witnesses that you had four relief works in each district ?

A.—We began with one in each district and gradually increased. We had five in each of the two districts Jubbulpore and Seoni by the end of January.

Q.—You began with one road work in each district ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was your system that of payment by results ?

A.—Always.

Q.—You had no system of fining ?

A.—No, no fining.

Q.—That is to say people were paid for what they did ?

A.—Yes, precisely.

Q.—On your works had you kitchens ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you feed dependants at these kitchens ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And you did not allow people on works to work over the maximum task ?

A.—No.

Q.—Were they allowed a rest day ?

A.—Yes ; they were.

Q.—Were they paid for it ?

A.—Yes ; the minimum wage.

Q.—Was the minimum wage allowed to dependants ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were they paid in money or grain ?

A.—In money.

Q.—Do you think the people earned full wages, Mr. White ?

A.—In Mandla and Seoni I found that people as a rule did very nearly a full task.

Q.—They got full wages ?

A.—Very nearly.

Q.—The percentage was from 94 to 100 ?

A.—About that.

Q.—When the rains came on in June or rather in May, there was a great drop on all works ; was that owing to any action on your part or was it automatic ?

A.—We closed the works ; only two were kept open in each of the districts Jubbulpore and Seoni and one in Mandla.

Q.—Did you raise your tasks ?

A.—I went away : I was invalided to England at the end of April, but I know what happened since then.

Q.—Were able-bodied people sent off to village relief ?

A.—Everybody.

Q.—Why were two works kept open ?

A.—Because, I suppose, it was considered too bold an experiment to send everybody away.

Q.—You had five works open in May at Seoni ; then you closed three works ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Sending people back to their villages ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—As to what happened in the villages, you know nothing ?

A.—No.

Q.—You kept these other works open, and they gradually decreased, the numbers falling from 8,000 to 3,000 ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Coming to Jubbulpore, you had more people on your work in Jubbulpore than in Seoni?

A.—Not at all; there was exactly the same number—36 lakhs.

Q.—Your week's figures would lead to a different conclusion. Looking at your figures generally, you had more on your works at Jubbulpore than at Seoni?

A.—Precisely the same—36 lakhs.

Q.—You have practically the same numbers expressed as a day's unit?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In Jubbulpore the percentage of the full wage earned was 75 to 80 per cent.?

A.—I think it is more than that, men got 82 per cent. and women 97 per cent.; therefore the average between the two is more than 90 per cent. I refer to page 6 of Mr. St. Clair's reply.

Q.—I am quoting from page 7.

A.—A man got 4·7 out of six pice, i.e. 82 per cent., and a woman got 3·9 out of four pice, i.e. 97 per cent.

Q.—How do you distinguish between the payments made to men and women inasmuch as they were all paid the same wages?

A.—No; they were paid differently.

Q.—Were they paid differently in your charge?

A.—Yes, certainly.

Q.—According to your fixed scale, they were paid the same number of *chhataks*? Does it not mean that the payment is the same to men and women?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How do you distinguish between the amounts paid to women and men?

A.—They add the total amounts paid to men and the total amounts paid to women; the total amounts due to men and women and get these percentages.

Q.—You paid to the gang; you did not pay the individual coolies?

A.—To gangs.

Q.—How do you precisely distinguish between the two sexes?

A.—The majority of the carriers are women and the diggers are almost invariably men.

Q.—A digger earned 82 per cent.?

A.—Yes.

Q.—If the diggers earned 82 per cent., how do you distinguish between them and the carriers when they were paid by the gang?

A.—The totals of the earnings of men and women are taken from the gang registers.

Q.—And the carriers earned 97 per cent. of their full wage?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You do not distinguish between men and women carriers?

A.—I do not.

Q.—How has this mistake\* occurred? Will you be good enough, Mr. White, to verify your figures with those of Mr. St. Clair's because it is a matter of importance?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The average percentage of the full wage actually earned in Mandla is shown as 71 to 75. Do you accept that?

A.—I should have expected a much higher percentage. I should like to verify that also with Mr. St. Clair's figures.

Q.—Did you find that people coming to your works showed signs of privation?

A.—Not at all.

B. { Q.—In the three districts, Mandla, Seoni, and Jubbulpore, you started your relief works in the commencement? You did not see any signs of emaciation?

A.—No, except among children, that is to say among tiny babes only.

Q.—Did you form an impression regarding the adequacy or redundancy, as a living wage, of the wages paid? Do you think the wages were too high or too low?

A.—I think that they were too high.

Q.—According to the scale upon which you worked you paid to women carriers the same wage as you paid to the male carriers. Do you think it would have been safe to give the female carriers lower wages than the male carriers? A male carrier gets 15 *chhataks*?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You are of opinion that that is an excessive wage?

A.—For a woman it is; not for a man.

Q.—A man is supposed to get 19 *chhataks*?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Had you experience of the previous famine?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You did not pay 15 *chhataks* in the previous famine?

A.—No.

Q.—You paid 14?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you find that in the previous famine 14 *chhataks* was sufficient to live on?

A.—People came on in such a bad condition in the last famine.

Q.—Did they ever recover their condition?

A.—They did not.

\* This referred to the percentage of full wage earned.

Q.—When they came in good condition, were the wages sufficient to keep them in good health?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think eight *chhataks* sufficient for a working child?

A.—Quite sufficient.

Q.—Did you feed any working children on cooked food?

A.—No. With reference to the eight *chhataks* I should explain that I have no knowledge whether they got exactly eight *chhataks*, for they always worked with families and may have got more.

C. { Q.—As a result of the evidence which you have now given to the Commission am I right in saying that when you began relief works people came to those works having no signs of emaciation amongst them; that children showed signs of emaciation; that you consider the wages paid are on the whole too high; that they may be reduced; and that as regards the health of the workers it was good?

A.—Yes. Very good.

Q.—Were you troubled with cholera?

A.—Yes, there were about 130 deaths in Jubbulpore and about the same number in Seoni.

Q.—Not more?

A.—No; the total mortality on works was at the rate of five per mille per annum without cholera and 13 per mille with cholera.

Q.—Jubbulpore, Mandla, and Seoni may be said to be the fringe of the famine districts. They were scarcity districts more than famine districts?

A.—I think they would have been worse if they had got no relief; they had absolutely no crops and no work; they had a little *rabbi*, but their rice crop was entirely gone.

Q.—You began with 70 cubic feet as the task; did you adhere to that?

A.—We increased it to 80 cubic feet.

Q.—You did not go above 80 cubic feet?

A.—Yes, to 90 cubic feet.

Q.—When was that?

A.—Before the hot weather we raised it to 90 cubic feet, then during the two hottest months we lowered it again on account of the extreme heat. Then we raised it again when the ground was soft owing to rain and easy to work.

Q.—When you raised it, had it any effect on the performance of the task?

A.—None at all; the people did it with the greatest ease.

Q.—When you commenced the tasks with 70 cubic feet, did you consider it was too small a task at the commencement?

A.—I think it was too small a task for a famine task, but people had to get accustomed to work.

Q.—Did you pay the head man of a gang or did you go down to the actual digger?

A.—We paid to the head man of the gang except on task works.

Q.—Had you any task works alongside of the intermediate work system?

A.—Yes; for the weakly gangs.

Q.—Did you find that they earned about the minimum? Were they content with the minimum wage?

A.—Yes. They were mostly old and infirm people; you could not expect much work from them; they did very light work.

Q.—You simply kept them employed?

A.—Yes; that is all.

Mr. Nicholson.—You have told us in your evidence that the wage scale was sufficiently liberal?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And the prices on which you based the wage scale were 11 to 12½ per cent. lower than the prices actually prevailing?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was that adopted generally in your Division?

A.—Yes.

Q.—For how long a period?

A.—For the whole period.

Q.—In your works throughout you had the intermediate system. You think that system, if relief be started in time, is sufficient for a state of intense famine?

A.—I think it is entirely sufficient.

Q.—You found people kept in good condition on that system?

A.—Yes.

The President.—With regard to the question regarding selection, were there many people, Mr. White, on the works whom the selection excluded?

A.—I have not been given the figures.

Q.—Was it a very efficient agent or means of excluding people from works?

A.—I think it was efficient. It is easier to eliminate people actually on the works than to select them beforehand for admission to works.

Q.—How could it be ascertained that the people lived within a radius for which a ticket was required?

A.—Only by the local knowledge of the revenue officer.

Q.—Was he always on the spot?

A.—The revenue officer always attended the work to give tickets.

Q.—And it rested really with him to give the tickets?

A.—Entirely.

Mr. Nicholson.—Was not the ticket issued by the charge officer?

A.—Yes, by the charge officer.

Q.—He issued it to all villages—to the people periodically?

A.—Yes.

The President.—As I understand, a man had only to get a ticket if his village was only within a four-mile radius?

A.—Yes, that is so.

Mr. Bourdillon.—You closed up your works at the end of May or beginning of June in accordance with the circular of the 11th May?

A.—Yes, the majority of them.

Q.—And that sent away a large number of people to their villages?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Rains actually did not fall till the middle of July?

A.—No.

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FURTHER EVIDENCE OF MR. G. G. WHITE, EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,  
JUBBULPORE DIVISION.

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The President.—Your experience is that the majority of male adults that came upon your relief works on earthwork were, as a rule, classed as diggers?

A.—They were.

Q.—And boys of 15?

A.—No, not boys of 15 and 16; able-bodied men were, no doubt, in a vast majority employed as diggers.

Q.—The carrier's class, as a rule, is composed of women or working children?

A.—As a rule, and also boys of 14, 15, 16, and 17.

Q.—Working children or boys who would be up to 17?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The same rule held good when you had to deal with adults who broke metal?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Had you much to do with the breaking of metal?

A.—Yes, in the rains.

Q.—As a rule did adult males get a higher wage?

A.—Yes.

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[The witness subsequently wrote:—]

Re my answers at A. I did not quite catch the drift of the President's questions at first in saying "men" and "women" in the 4th answer, I used the terms to indicate diggers and carriers, because, as explained in my 11th answer lower down, mainly all the diggers were men and the vast majority of the carriers were women.

Re my reply to question 4 at C.:—

The children that were emaciated referred only to babes in arms (*vide* my reply to the question about emaciation at B on previous page.



Answers by G. G. WHITE, Esq., Executive Engineer, Jubbulpore Division, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

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Q. 9.—The Jubbulpore Division was well prepared to meet famine. List of relief works were ready. The works had been actually located.

Raising in class of existing roads formed a large part of the programme; also the improvement of existing tanks. Tank works were not in the previously prepared lists as they were only determined on when famine broke out.

The works were in all cases such as could be begun without regular surveys, the necessary surveying was done as the work proceeded.

Q. 10.—Large public works were relied on as the backbone of the relief system.

Q. 14.—In the Seoni and Mandla districts there is ordinarily hard basalt moorum within a short depth from the ground surface and water cannot be depended upon all the year round except near nalas where irrigation wells are sometimes made, but which in that position necessarily command only a small area.

In the Jubbulpore District irrigation wells are not much used though the sub-soil water is nearer the surface than in the abovementioned hill districts.

Q. 20.—The large relief works were under the control of the Public Works Department. The scale of supervising establishment had been prescribed in advance.

The establishment was ready in so far that individuals to fill the appointments were readily forthcoming within each district when called for.

The subordinate Engineering Establishment was filled up from the members of the Public Works Department employed in the district, and when that supply was exhausted by importations from Engineering Colleges outside.

Famine developed gradually in the Jubbulpore, Seoni and Mandla districts of the Public Works Division, and there was no delay in opening works

Public works camps were opened in most cases within a fortnight of their being called for by the Civil Department. Tools and plant were available in every case.

Q. 21.—The works were divided into charges, the maximum prescribed for a charge was 6,000.

This number was exceeded for a time by 4 to 5 thousand in two of the Seoni charges in the rice district, and new charges were opened to which the surplus was drafted. No difficulty, however, was experienced in working with the larger number owing to the excellence of the intermediate system.

In the Jubbulpore District the numbers exceeded the limit in three charges for a time, in two cases the surplus numbers were easily accommodated by expansion of the works, and in the third case an overflow camp was started a few miles off.

Q. 22.—Each charge had its own establishment on the lines prescribed in General Order No. 287—7630-F, dated the 20th September 1899. The following was the establishment for a camp of 6,000:—

- 1 Officer-in-charge at Rs. 100 to Rs. 150,
- 3 Work Agents at Rs. 40 each,
- 1 Clerk at Rs. 25,
- 1 Assistant Clerk at Rs. 15,
- 12 Gang Muharrirs at Rs. 15 each,
- 1 Hospital Assistant at Rs. 30,
- 1 Kitchen Muharrir at Rs. 15,
- 1 Compounder at Rs. 15,
- 24 Sweepers at Rs. 6 each,
- 8 Mates for setting out work at Rs. 7 each,
- 1 Tools Muharrir at Rs. 20,
- 1 Head Constable at Rs. 8,

- 3 Constables at Rs. 6 each,
- 1 Cook at Rs. 6,
- 1 Water Jamadar at Rs. 8,
- 1 Conservancy Jamadar at Rs. 8,

and additional coolies for water-supply, hospital, kitchen and conservancy, paid as special, on gang register on the lines laid down in General Order No. 287—7630-F, dated the 20th September 1899. For hutting, arrangements were made as per paragraph 105 idem. Grass or bamboo mats were given to the workers, who, as a rule, made their own shelter.

The huts for the establishment, hospital, and kitchen were got ready before the work was open.

For conservancy arrangements were made as per paragraph 107 idem. Flags were fixed 400 yards from the work and about 25 chowkidars (Muhammadans for choice) posted to ensure the workers taking their morning walks at least that distance away. For water-supply the instructions contained in paragraphs 100—104 idem were exactly carried out. For food-supply as per paragraph 115 idem. Baniyas were in residence in each camp who supplied the workers that lived in the camp. Many workers used to purchase from the nearest weekly bazar.

Those workers who went home every day after work often made their purchases in their own villages or at the nearest bazar. For medical convenience and supervision, arrangements were made precisely as prescribed in paragraphs 108—112 idem.

Q. 23.—Admission to the works was free to all persons ready to submit to the labour test, and no system of selection of any sort was tried at the commencement. Later on in February when it was found that some of the workers who lived within a 4 to 5 mile radius were cultivators who had sown more than 5 acres of rabi crop or owned more than two head of cattle, other than plough cattle, or owned a cart—had in fact some visible means of subsistence—a ticket system was introduced by which such persons and their families were excluded.

No distance test was insisted on, excepting that in the Seoni District when drafts were made from overfull charges, the workers who lived near the overfull camp were selected for draft to the new camp about 7 miles off. Residence on the works was not compulsory.

Q. 24.—A large public work with two charges of 6,000 persons each will, I have found, serve an area of about 400 square miles. The area served varies of course with the acuteness of distress.

A small number of workers came from as far as 25 miles to a work. The people will go readily long distances, say 15 to 18 miles, to a work so long as it is in their own tract; but will not go a much shorter distance outside it, for instance across a range of hills, or from a rice tract to a rabi one, or *vice versa*.

It was found by taking occasional censuses of the workers that they preferred to, and as a rule did sleep at, their homes if the latter were within 3 and sometimes 4 miles of the work.

Q. 25.—Officers of the Public Works Department were subordinate to the Civil authorities in all except purely technical matters.

Q. 26.—There was a Civil Officer in each charge, taken from the class of Naib-Tahsildars; he received a salary of Rs. 100 per mensem with monthly increments for approved service of Rs. 10 each up to Rs. 150. As a matter of fact none rose higher than Rs. 130 in the Jubbulpore (Public Works) Division.

The Officer-in-charge was directly subordinate himself to the local Public Works Sub-Divisional Officer, and the Public Works Sub-Overseers and Work Agents on the charge were subordinate to the Officer-in-charge in so far as their proper performance of duties prescribed by the Sub-Divisional Officer was concerned. The Civil Officer-in-charge had full authority to assure himself that measurements were correctly and punctually made, and that the orders of Government in connection with matters mentioned at the end of paragraph 426 of the Famine Commission Report of 1898 were followed.

Q. 27.—The Civil Officer-in-charge was authorised in emergent cases to decide which of the prescribed task was applicable (*e. g.*, in varying strata of hard and soft earth).

Q. 28.—Each gang of labourers was made up as far as possible of people of the same village, and ordinarily contained from 20 to 30 persons.

In tank work, where the number of carriers had to be increased for the gangs working in the middle of the tank, the numbers in the gang ran up sometimes to 50. Under this system families were always kept together and the system of village gangs was uniformly successful.

Q. 29.—The classification and wage scale of labourers adopted at the commencement was as per column A of subjoined table:—

	as in 1897 Column A. <i>beginning of Famine 1897-98</i>	as in 1900 Column B. <i>revised in 1900</i>	Column C. <i>as per Famine 1901</i>
Special mates, &c. ...	2 pice more than diggers.	1 pice more than diggers.	Not specified.
Diggers ...	20 chittaks	19 chittaks	20 chittaks.
Adult carriers ...	15 "	15 "	15 "
Working children ...	8 to 12 years 8 chittaks.	8 to 14 years 8 chittaks.	8 to 12 years 8 chittaks.
Adult dependants and minimum wage ...	12 chittaks	12 chittaks	12 chittaks.
Non-working children ...	Over 8 years 7 chittaks.	8 to 14 years 8 chittaks.	Over 8 years 7 chittaks.
Do. ...	Under 8 years 5 chittaks.	8 to 14 years 4 chittaks.	Under 8 years 5 chittaks.
Babes in arms ...	1 pice	1 pice	.....

This was altered as per Circular Memorandum No. 6-1695, dated the 10th February 1900, as per column B.

The classification and wage scale of paragraph 456 of the Famine Commission Report of 1898 is given in column C above.

The slight lowering of the wage scale, and alteration of the classification as compared with that of column C, had no bad effect on the condition of the workers, and resulted in some economy.

Q. 30.—In my opinion the absence of a sexual sub-division in the classes as adopted in the Central Provinces was fully justified by results; it led to no difficulty.

In the few cases where women were employed as diggers owing to the deficiency of men, they got the carrier's wage and did  $\frac{3}{4}$ ths the digger's task.

In the cases where able-bodied men had to be employed as carriers, they received carrier's wage and did  $1\frac{1}{2}$  carrier's task.

Financially considered, the absence of a sexual sub-division resulted in a saving without any corresponding falling-off in health to the men when employed on the carrier task and getting the lower wage.

But in practice able-bodied men should not be, and were not, set to do the carrier's work and thus get a 15 chittaks wage for any considerable length of time.

Q. 31.—Code task system was not introduced anywhere except for the small percentage of weakly persons; the system of payment-by-results known as the 'Intermediate' was used from the outset. Two or three task work gangs of about 80 persons each were found sufficient to accommodate the weakly persons on each charge, they were employed on light work near the camp.

Q. 32.—Famine developed so gradually in the Jubbulpore Division that no circumstances were likely to, or did, arise interfering with the exact working of the Intermediate system. My experience, however, of this system and of the facility with which it can be worked with people in good condition, leads me to unhesitatingly to recommend it under any circumstances of acuteness or sudden incidence of famine in preference to task work. In my evidence supplied to the Famine Commission of 1898, I held these views and my subsequent experience of the actual working of the payment-by-results system fully bears them out. The same amount of measuring is required in either system, and the risk to the worker of not getting his work measured in the event of a sudden inrush of new-comers overwhelming the available staff can always be met by giving him full payment for the time being as would be done in similar circumstances on task work.

Q. 33.—Full tasks as detailed in General Order No. 287, page 9, and Appendix IV, were exacted at the outset. There was no occasion to graduate the tasks as the condition of all the workers put on to 'Intermediate' was good. No allowance was made for the distance the workers had to come.

Subsequent changes of the task were in the Seoni District in the direction of severity so long as ordinary conditions of climate prevailed, *i. e.*, up to the extent when changes took a reverse direction towards normal tasks in view of the heat.

In the Jubbulpore District there were no changes. The reason for increasing where this was done was that it was found that the diggers completed their work early in the afternoon.

In a few cases where much carrying had to be done and the people had got a taste of the work, tasks were increased for the same reason.

Q. 34.—The scale of wages adopted was in my opinion unduly liberal since the Commissioner in many cases used his discretion and ordered a cheaper rate than the price and in no case had he to fix a dearer rate. The workers saved out of their wages a good condition of the workers was maintained.

I made a large number of personal enquiries day by day into the food purchased from different families of workers, and compared them with the wages received, and found in every case some saving, and in many cases a considerable saving.

In one set of experiments in the Seoni District I found a saving of as much as a head amounting to a percentage on the wages received of 20 per cent., and in another set 1 pice per head, *i. e.*, 10 per cent.

This was at a time when the wage rate was somewhat cheaper than the price current so that the savings had the price current scale been in force, would have been even more.

In the Jubbulpore District my enquiries elicited a somewhat similar result.

In my opinion the wage scale of workers could be lowered 10 per cent. without the least risk of harm. Copper coin returned freely to the banias on the work.

Q. 35.—A rest-day wage was given throughout the famine in the Jubbulpore District and in the Seoni District, except for one month in the latter district where there was field work available in cutting the rabi crop.

In my opinion a rest-day wage should, as a rule, if the 10 per cent. reduction above suggested is made, be given, but if the existing wage scale is maintained I submit that it is unnecessary.

The rest-day wage is equivalent to about 12 per cent., so there is not much to choose between the alternative reductions suggested.

Q. 36.—The question of minimum or penal wage hardly ever arose during this famine, as the only task workers were the exceedingly small percentage of weakly people who were seldom fined.

Q. 37.—No reply required, see answer to No. 36.

Q. 38.—Payments were made daily and this was perhaps the best arrangement during this first trial of a new system. On a future occasion, I think, measurements and payments might safely on all accounts be made every other day, at all events where the work is extended over a long length of road where the charges are large and the staff available is not over abundant. and the strain on the staff is consequently very great.

Q. 39.—See answer to 38.

Q. 40.—Payment was made to the head of the village gang who was invariably elected by the members of the gang.

Task workers in weakly gangs were paid individually.

The success of the system of paying the head of the gang in the Intermediate system was absolute: complaints against the headman for non-payment were practically nil; and the saving in time and trouble in making payments was inestimable.



The only practical effect on the workers' wage of the modification in February in the Jubbulpore Division was that the Jubbulpore diggers were reduced 1 pice and on the dependants' wage a slight reduction in the children's wage.

The wages paid to workers are noted in tabular form below :—

	SEONI.		JUBBULPORE.			MANDLA.
	11 SEERS.	12½ SEERS.	14 SEERS.		13 SEERS.	10½ SEERS.
	October to January.	January to September.	November to January.	January to September.	December to September.	April to September.
Class I—Diggers	Pice. 7	Pice. 6	Pice. 6	Pice. 5	Pice. 6	Pice. 7
Class II—Carriers	5	5	4	4	5	6
Class III—Working children..	3	3	2	2	2	3
No. of charges	Two	Six	Four	Four	One	One

Non-working children were relieved in the kitchen attached to each charge at a cost of 2 pice each.

Emaciated children were specially treated with milk and Mellin's food.

After March nursing mothers were given half tasks in the intermediate gangs.

Weakly persons capable of some work were put in infirm gangs on the old task work system with a minimum, but no penal wage.

The wage given varied between the Class II wage as a maximum and the minimum wage according as they did a fair day's work or very little.

In some cases it was considered necessary to give the Class II wage without fining even where they did very little work.

The system proved successful and as the weakly recovered their strength they were drafted to the intermediate gangs.

In my opinion the task work system is distinctly preferable to the Intermediate system for weakly persons as they differ among themselves more in condition than to the numbers of an intermediate gang and it is difficult to assess appropriate tasks.

The percentage of weakly persons on a work was ordinarily 2 to 3 per cent., and seldom if ever exceeded 4 per cent.

It should never, when a famine is taken in time, be so large that the question of how the weakly are employed becomes one of more than minor importance.

Q. 44.—Contractors were not employed at any stage of the famine.

Q. 45.—Under the payment-by-results system gang registers of the form specified in General Order No. 287, Appendices XI-C and XI-D were used.

Inspection of these forms will show that they are equally applicable to task work and to intermediate.

No names are entered, merely a numerical list of the totals in each class is given.

The only difference is in the way of assessing fines.

The derived accounts are identical.

The measurements taken are identical.

The change from intermediate to task work can be made at an hour's notice.

Q. 46.—The price scale for the calculation of the wages was fixed by the Commissioner or the Deputy Commissioner.

It was based on the cheapest food-grain available in the locality: small variations in prices were never considered.

Q. 47.—On receipt of instructions from the Civil authorities that a charge is to be opened at a certain place a camp fully equipped as laid down in General Order No. 287, Appendix II, is got ready, the scale and plan therein specified being generally adopted. A sufficiency of tools is sent out, existing wells near the camp are fenced in, and new ones dug where necessary.

Banias are sent to the camp with a store of grain. Arrangements made with the Deputy Commissioner for the supply of small coin and copper, and two police guards engaged—one for the camp treasure chest and the other for escorting supplies from the treasury to the camp.

A Hospital Assistant and a supply of medicines is sent to the camp, and the rest of the staff required. Work is laid out for a day or two a head by the work agents.

All being ready notice is sent to the Deputy Commissioner and new-comers are received by the Officer-in-charge, who proceeds to classify and make them up into gangs, village by village, entering on each gang register the mate's name, the numbers of each class of workers and dependants, and a list of tools required. The gangs are passed on to the tools store, where they are provided with tools, and thence sent to the work agents, who conduct them to their allotted places and set them to work.

Workers who intend to sleep on the works are usually on the first day set to construct shelter huts for themselves, materials being supplied to them.

Two systems were employed in regard to payment of new-comers—

(a) In the Seoni district from the commencement they were paid the minimum wage on the first day for a fair day's work. On the second day the work of the first day was measured and the workers were paid on the first day's measurements (fines being seldom inflicted for any shortage on the first day's work), and so on. By this system payments were always up to date and workers leaving the work had not to present themselves for payment on the day following their last working day, but could depart on receiving their pay in the evening of the last working day.

(b) In the Jubbulpore district at the commencement no payments were made on the first day to new-comers; they were offered cooked food and seldom availed themselves of it.

Their work done on the first day was measured on the second day when they received their first payment.

Payment under the former (a) system was afterwards adopted in the Jubbulpore district as well. It is in my opinion the better of the two: the people do not get into debt with the bania on the first day. It is more in accordance with their ideas to be paid daily from the commencement, and there are no complaints.

The procedure for a typical day's work is as follows:—

The gang muharrirs are on the ground the first thing in the morning, entering the attendance and distributing the gang registers to the gang mates.

The work agents follow close behind, setting out on the ground and entering on the register the day's task, and at the same time measuring up and entering yesterday's work done, and noting down the deficiency, if any.

The gang muharrirs after taking all the attendance, proceed to obtain from the Officer-in-charge sums of money approximating to the previous day's payment of each, and again pass along the gangs completing the entries of payments due to each class, calculating and deducting fines, if any, and making payments.

Having completed this operation the gang muharrirs return to camp and make up their day-books.

The Officer-in-charge with his office staff checks the day-books, takes back any balance remaining with the gang muharrirs, and makes up his own day-book and cash-book. Theoretically this office work should be completed the same evening, but in practice on large works it is impossible, albeit work in this office goes on every working day up to 9 P. M. and sometimes later.

The Officer-in-charge's day-book and cash-book are, however, always posted before noon on the following day. The essential point is that the gang muharirr's balances should always be returned to chest the same evening, and their accounts cleared before commencement of another day's work.

Q. 48.—Tasks and wages were stiffened or relaxed under the orders of the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner co-operating with the Executive Engineer.

Q. 51.—No drafts were made from large public works to village works.

Q. 68.—Dependants were relieved on large public works in the kitchen attached to each camp, and in branch kitchens situated at outlying parts of extensive charges.

They were given cooked food in all cases.

Q. 77.—Admission to Public Works kitchens to weakly persons and non-working children was unrestricted. No able-bodied persons ever presented themselves at kitchens, even as new-comers on the first day of their attendance at a work.

Q. 78.—Brahmin cooks were employed. No reluctance was shown by any caste of dependant to taking cooked food at the Public Works kitchens.

Q. 79.—The Hospital Assistant looked after the Public Works kitchens under the Officer-in-charge. Under the Hospital Assistant a kitchen muharirr was in direct charge, a man on Rs. 12 to 15 per mensem.

The Hospital Assistant indented daily on the bania for the necessary supplies. The Officer-in-charge frequently supervised the meals and paid the bills after checking the indents with the attendance registers.

Q. 92.—In my opinion the Code tests are sufficient when strictly applied. But the wage scale must not be too liberal. In this last famine I believe it was so, and though the tasks were strictly enforced and the workers in the Jubbulpore Division did, I should say, well over 90 per cent. of their tasks throughout, yet examination by Civil authorities in February showed that a certain percentage—I cannot say exactly what—possibly 10 per cent.—of the workers were persons of some means. That is to say, they were cultivators who had sown more than 5 acres of rabi, or possessed a cart, or owned more than two head of cattle other than plough cattle. These persons were not considered to be in need of relief, should not have been on the works, and were turned off.

Further, all applicants for relief after this discovery had to be examined by a Revenue official, and those who passed the test only were admitted. Whether this ticket system could be safely introduced to deal with large number of applicants I cannot say: it is obviously open to much abuse in the possible absence of a large enough staff of reliable officials to work it, and unless the percentage of applicants eliminated by this system amounted to an appreciable percentage of the whole population of the district, it is a question whether the staff employed would not be better engaged in supervising the actual work of relief.

I think that if the tasks on a famine-relief work are worked up to within, say, 10 per cent., and if the wage scale is somewhat reduced, the percentage of applicants that would be excluded as 'men of means' would not rise to 1 per cent. of the district population.

Q. 96.—In no case as far as I know was increased mortality traceable to impurity or insufficiency of the water-supply provided for, or in the immediate neighbourhood of Public Works relief-camps. Every well in the vicinity of works in the Jubbulpore district was cleaned out before the camp was opened, and subsequently treated with permanganate of potash, in some cases every second week and in others once a week, and more frequently during an epidemic.

In the Seoni district similar precautions were taken, but the permanganate was applied weekly, and when cholera broke out every second day.



The precautions for guarding wells and other sources of water-supply and for the distribution, laid down in General Order No. 287, paragraphs 100—104, were strictly enforced.

Q. 97.—The sanitary arrangements prescribed in General Order No. 287, paragraph 107, were made.

Trenches were dug more than 400 yards from every camp for the workers. These were seldom used, the workers preferring the open field beyond the 400 yards flags. Separate latrines were made for camp staff, another for the hospital, and another for the kitchens.

They were sufficient, and were supervised by the Hospital Assistant in particular, and by Inspecting Officers in general, particularly of the Medical Staff.

Q. 98.—The Officer-in-charge and Hospital Assistant regularly inspected the grain shops on the works, as also did other Inspecting Officers. Inferior grain was detected in a few cases.

Q. 99.—As far as I can gather, certain classes, such as Gonds, Katias, &c., supplemented their food for two or three months during the mahua season with that fruit, and with no appreciable effect on their health.

Apart from this mahua, I do not think there was any considerable use of jungle products.

Q. 108.—The departure from the provision of the Famine Code in the case of the introduction of the intermediate system as defined in General Order No. 287 was justified in my experience by its complete success.

The introduction of the ticket system referred to in my answer to Question 93 was also a departure, and as applied to the comparatively small numbers concerned in the Jubbulpore Division was undoubtedly successful.

Q. 109.—In the Jubbulpore district a Staff Corps Officer, whose principal duty was civil relief, also inspected Public Works camps for a short time, and in Seoni another Staff Corps Officer did the same throughout the famine.

No officers of the Native Army or Non-Commissioned Officers of the British Army were employed in connection with Public Works relief-works in the Jubbulpore Division.

Q. 111.—(a) No change was made in the system of work.

(b) Increases of the task had no effect on the number of people seeking relief or on the death-rate.

(c) The same remark applies to the one change in the scale of wages.

(d) No changes were made in the mode of calculating fines.

(e) Drafting resulted in a decrease of the numbers of the workers, that is to say, a certain proportion of each draft failed to arrive at the new camp.

But drafting did not apparently deter others from seeking relief.

These changes did not lead to my disorganisation or wandering.

Q. 112.—As far as I can gather, the massing of people on large works during the last famine had no tendency to disorganize family life—there were no complaints or disturbances.

The system of grouping the workers together by villages as followed in the intermediate system tends very considerably to minimise any evils that may arise on this account, and also very materially aids the work of supervision.

G. G. WHITE,

*Executive Engineer.*

*The 6th January 1901.*



SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE OF MR. CLEVELAND,  
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, SAUGOR.

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GRATUITOUS relief had been started in February 1899 in the Khurai tahsíl. This tahsíl was seriously distressed. I don't think relief works would have reached the class affected. They were miserable survivals. I think that their numbers did not exceed 5,000 before this famine began. When I got back in November the *rabí* sowing was good. The fields had been very well prepared. The germination was far better than we expected. The drop in February was in anticipation of the *rabí* harvest. Some left of their own free will: tasks were being raised. The ticket system was introduced. The decrease in gratuitous relief was due to the alteration of rules. We exercised much greater selection for cash relief.

At the end of March I found things getting bad. The outside labourers who went south for the harvest did very badly. And people came back with a rush. The dole was given to high caste people. Others were relieved at kitchens. As to the dole, selection was made by the *patwári* and *mukaddam*, but people were brought on the list by the Inspector or Charge Officer.

As to the kitchens at first there was a great prejudice against kitchens: we encouraged them as a test. Then all of a sudden the prejudice gave way and people followed one another like a flock of sheep. If we had adhered to the selection system, the numbers on gratuitous relief would have been fewer. A percentage of people came on relief without need. The difficulty was foreigners. Poorhouses would not have answered in their case. There were many able-bodied among them. There were 2,000 at one kitchen. One of the causes of the great mortality in August was the drinking of bad water from pools. Eating one heavy meal a day was also conducive to ill-health.



Memorandum by C. R. CLEVELAND, Esq., I. C. S., Officiating Inspector-General  
of Police and Jails, Central Provinces, dated the 4th January 1901.

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1. I left the Saugor district at the end of July 1900 and have since had my head and hands full of the hitherto somewhat unfamiliar details of the work of the Police and Jails Departments. I have no famine statistics to refer to to refresh my memory or to inform me of the exact facts connected with the final progress of the famine in Saugor. Under these circumstances I venture to refrain from answering individually the questions of the Commission and will merely note on some general aspects of Saugor history.

2. From 1894 to 1898 there was continuous scarcity or famine in the Saugor district. In 1896-97 there was acute famine in almost every part. A bumper kharif provided a sufficiency of cheap food in December 1897 and arrested for some time distress and hunger: but money continued scarce and the district was decidedly anæmic in 1898. Local differences are very considerable even within small limits of area, and all generalizations are subject to many individual exceptions. The north-west portion of the district constituting the Khurai tahsil has a special history of its own, and in 1898 presented a striking illustration of general deterioration. In 1897-98 the rabi cultivation in this tahsil, the life of the people and the country, had given way to the extent of 80 per cent., while the whole cropped area had fallen off by 40 per cent.

3. In the whole district the recorded excess of deaths over births between 1891 and 1898 was about 80,000, but the actual loss of population was, I think, about 140,000. In the Khurai tahsil as a whole I believe in 1898 the population was little more than three-fifths of the census figure of 1891. In the monsoon season of 1898, the situation was an anxious one all over the district and an alarming one in the Khurai tahsil. Special efforts were made to stimulate cultivation in Khurai, and as evidence of the exertions made in this direction and of the opinion at one time held of the results, I venture to quote the following passage from a demi-official letter to me, written on 4th January 1899 by the then Chief Commissioner in connection with proceedings in the Khurai tahsil: "But you have your reward in the knowledge that you have put new life and hope into some thousands of poor creatures and have probably saved a large portion of your district from the abomination of desolation."

4. The early months of 1899 were unfortunate, frost and hail doing great damage in the restricted rabi area. The land revenue and rental demands were liberally cut down by suspension and abatement, and in February village relief was started on a small scale in the Khurai tahsil and in part of Banda. It was a most fortunate dispensation that the rains of 1899 were not so complete a failure in Saugor as in many other districts. I left India on three months' leave at the end of July 1899 and the monsoon outlook was then highly favourable. But on my return at the end of October 1899 I found famine in the air, test works established, prices high, and the people very anxious. In Saugor the amount of the rainfall is not nearly so important as the distribution, while the crops have more often failed from excess than from deficiency of moisture. In 1894-95 with a rainfall of 46 inches the harvests failed owing to damp, while in 1895-96 with a rainfall of 43 inches they were poor owing to drought. The wettest August followed by a dry September means bad crops, while a very short monsoon can be almost completely corrected by a couple of inches of Xmas rain.

5. The kharif at the end of 1899 was on the whole better than seemed possible in October, and the poorest classes found unexpected assistance in a wonderful crop of "ber" berries. But it was obvious that there was acute distress in certain parts of the district and among certain classes of the people, and the great problem was how to accurately gauge the necessities of different areas and of different classes. In the 1897 famine I was not in Saugor, but I went there, after an intimate connection with the district as Settlement Officer and Deputy Commissioner from 1891 to 1894, just after the famine, viz., in May 1898. The relief-works had been kept open in the rains and the people had an unfavourable recollection of them. Our early test-works in November 1899 failed to attract people in obvious distress and were not a satisfactory test of the actual conditions.

6. I deprecate reliance on one or two test-works as a means of judging of distress in the Saugor district, and I would mention a few things which prevent works being a proper touchstone:—

(1) Popular prejudice.

(2) Climatic conditions: e. g., in the cold weather firewood is a very important matter, in the hot weather good or bad shade and water-supply attract or keep off people.

- (3) Kind of labour. Unaccustomed labour is much feared by the people. Town labourers take more readily to stone-breaking than villagers. In parts of the district the prevailing soil is when dry most difficult to dig and heart-breaking stuff to work at. Carrying work is comparatively popular.
- (4) Tasks. On a test-work these are most difficult to adjust : the first few days are the hardest and discourage and disappoint many people.

And always in Saugor it must be remembered that the poorer classes are accustomed to derive a part of their sustenance from jungle produce. A distressed person discouraged on a relief-work is always tempted to try his luck in the jungles, where he may do very badly.

7. Up to the end of December there was always a chance of Xmas rains helping us to a good rabi. They did not come, but the rabi still thrived better than any one could have expected without rain. Storms in the third week of January 1900 did good, but the time for the complete restoration of the rabi plants had passed. The rabi harvest began early and its results were a great disappointment to the labouring classes, who had hoped much from it. The country was alive with labourers wandering about looking for harvest jobs, which many failed to find. It was all they could do to get the day's food from the day's work instead of the three days' food they had expected. The end of the reaping saw large numbers of labourers in distress and on the wander, and our relief-works showed great fluctuations in attendance. But many took to the jungles at this time in preference to works and did badly. Still there was the hope of the mahua, and then that failed. All through this time our village relief and kitchens continued to catch up the villagers who had failed in their struggle to find food elsewhere. To understand the course of events one must, I think, try to put oneself in the place of a poverty-stricken villager. He had several alternatives. He could go on to a relief-work, he could wander about finding an odd job here and there, or he could go to the jungles. If he broke down he would get kitchen or cash relief in his village. Up to almost the end of the hot weather he had these alternatives. The Saugor famine figures show great fluctuations, month by month, in the numbers on the various forms of relief. The fluctuations represent the changes of actual conditions of prospects and of popular feelings. Works were more popular at some times than at others, and their popularity had to be artificially regulated with a view to real requirements. All this while the village capitalists influenced the situation by withholding help or by giving it in accordance with their own view of prospects. A portion of Saugor agriculturists, small tenants and labourers, depend largely on the village capitalists, and the attitude of the latter governs the circumstances of the former to a considerable extent.

8. From October 1899 to May 1900 then the position was continually changing. The hope of one month was disappointed the next, and the despair of the future was occasionally lightened by an unexpected windfall. There was no room for a fixed programme. There was however full local knowledge, and elasticity of system was amply provided by the Government famine orders.

9. The most critical and difficult time was from May to August. The excessive severity of the end of the hot weather and the delay in the monsoon intensified all difficulties. Prices rose, supplies became difficult, capitalists withheld their help, the jungles failed, the people despaired, and the whole strain of maintaining poor people was thrown on Government. Popular prejudice to kitchens broke down, and the stream of poverty flowed to the easiest outlet, which was kitchen relief. From May onwards kitchens held the first place in importance in relief measures. People who stuck to the relief-works in the rains seemed to be more or less of a special and limited class, but differing more in their mental attitude than in their social position or general history from those who flocked to kitchens. In Saugor I think the people are less homogeneous than in most districts, and it is impossible to generalize as to what the bulk of the people will think or do. Some people would go miles to a relief-work ; others would never go a few miles from their homes to one. Some people seemed to think work honorable ; others of equal status seemed to think gratuitous relief their prescriptive right and would sooner starve than work. The mental attitude of individuals seemed to me a most important factor in deciding the form of relief chosen.

10. A special feature of the deteriorated parts of Saugor is the large number of destitute incapables, a legacy of the many bad years, who drag on a most precarious existence in villages. The first pinch of distress makes these people helpless and village relief is for many of them the only satisfactory form of relief. The comparatively large numbers on village relief in deteriorated tracts should surprise no one who saw the people on the tests during the past famine. The Land Record Staff in Saugor has been declared to be perhaps the most efficient in the Central Provinces, and its efficiency made the proper selection of people for village relief less difficult than it would otherwise have been.

11. The crowding of kitchens in the rains was a feature shared by many districts. Considering the strong popular prejudice which undoubtedly existed against kitchens in the early days of the famine, the subsequent rush to kitchens was remarkable.

12. Village works were not much resorted to. The country does not lend itself to tanks, and the early ones attempted were not a great success.

13. The Public Works Department works were very successful when they were under the management of an Assistant Engineer acting pretty closely under the orders of the Deputy Commissioner. I did not like their management at all when it was under an Executive Engineer, more or less independent of the Deputy Commissioner.

14. To relieve shy jungle villages special forest works were maintained in the hot weather and rains under the Forest Department and were a signal success.

15. The poor-house at Saugor was a capital institution, and I don't know what we should have done without it. It was chiefly a pauper hospital and saved the lives of very many wanderers who came to Saugor town in bad condition.

16. Foreigners gave great trouble in Saugor. First we had the "Marwaris" from Rajputana : then Banjaras in large numbers from Central India and Rajputana : then we had people from Bhopal, Gwalior, the Jhansi district of the North-Western Provinces, and a few from the small Native States on our north-eastern border. The migration of the "Marwaris" is too well known to need comment. They were excellent, self-respecting people, took readily to our relief-works, where they did better than our own people, and gave no trouble to speak of. The Banjaras were a great nuisance. They committed many thefts of cattle and other property, besieged our kitchens, and did not assist each other, with the result that those of them who fell out sick or weak from their gangs were thrown entirely on our hands for food and shelter. It is probable that it had been made hot for these wandering people in their usual haunts in Central India, and they were "moved on" until they struck the first British territory, which was the Khurai tahsil country.

17. Jhansi district people come down every year for our rabi harvesting, and this year many of them did so badly that they could not get back. At the end of the hot weather I handed over large numbers of Jhansi villagers to the Jhansi district authorities, some in terribly bad condition. The North-Western Provinces territory along our northern border was, so far as I could judge from what I heard and what I saw of its inhabitants who came over, in much the same state as the north of the Khurai and Banda tahsils.

Bhopal and Gwalior people gave us much trouble in the western portion of the Khurai tahsil.

To the foreigners we owed most of our cholera, a good many of our deaths, and infinite worry and trouble in our organisation of relief in the Khurai tahsil. We did our best to make our relief measures unattractive to foreigners, but there came a time when it would have been inhuman not to provide for them.

18. On the whole the lesson I think I learned in managing the Saugor famine was the great need for elasticity of system and for diversity of forms of relief.

C. R. CLEVELAND,

*Offg. Inspector-General of Police and Fails,*

4th January 1901.

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*Central Provinces.*





SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE OF RAO BAHÁDUR BEHARI LAL,  
KHAZANCHI, JUBBULPORE DISTRICT.

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IN the 1897 famine the distress was greater.

Kitchens were opened this year. Children and infirm people were put on kitchens.

The *Kurmis* and *Lodhs* at first did not come on relief. They came later under press of distress.

The *malguzárs* paid wages in grain.



Q. 1.—The monsoon of 1899 commenced with the usual prospects of good crops, but the rain suddenly ceased and there was no rain in August and September, and the outlook became gloomy, with growing anxiety in the mind of all the agricultural classes of the community.

In the two preceding years the harvests were not good, *i. e.*, *rabi crop* was 12 annas or 11 annas in the rupee, and the *kharif crop* only 8 annas in the rupee.

Q. 2.—The kharif sowings were up to normal.

Q. 4.—Kharif crops in 1899 failed entirely, save tilli, which is not extensively grown in this district.

Q. 6 and 7.—The necessity of relief from distress became evident by the failure of rains during the months of August and September. The authorities having made tours, for this purpose, began to think about taking steps while expecting rains every day, but in vain. As in the previous years, the crops yielded less and less gradually, and the previous famine had straitened the circumstances of the people, so the distress was felt in the district.

Q. 10.—In this district large public works and small village works were proposed to be started for relief at the end of the rainy season.

Q. 13.—Takavi (a kind of loan) was given to a certain extent to tenants.

Q. 14.—In this district irrigation wells are not sunk, but field bunds, which enable rain water to fill a field, were made.

Q. 17.—The payment was made in strict proportion to results. The maximum wage was five pice, and the minimum three pice. Cooked food (rice and dal) was given to dependants.

Q. 23.—The admission was not free to all persons; ticket system was adopted. In my opinion if a person comes to work, leaving his house at a distance of about a mile or so, he should be admitted without any further test. The fact that he comes for work leaving his house and is willing to submit to the task work, is itself a quite sufficient test to show that his condition must be miserable.

Q. 34.—The workers could not save anything out of their earnings.

Q. 35.—A rest-day wage, amounting to three pice per head, was given.

Q. 36.—The minimum wage was not high. In my opinion it was rather low.

Q. 38.—The payment was made daily.

Q. 39.—In this district daily payment was made, and this was desirable.

Q. 40.—The payment was made to the head of the gangs.

Q. 43.—The maximum wage was five pice. Kitchens were opened for children. Weak persons had light work, which was not measured, and one anna was given to them as wages. In my opinion this system is desirable, weak persons should get wages and their task should be light, and should not be measured.

Q. 53.—Small tanks were constructed and repaired and field embankments were made.

Q. 59.—Small village works are very useful, because these works can be started anywhere. The desirability of such works in this district cannot be denied, as the fixed embankments afford the same amount of advantage which other provinces derive by irrigation from canals and wells. Tanks are also very useful for this district.

Q. 61.—Forest and fodder works were opened at first, and proved to be useful till other big works were started.

Q. 63.—No such measures were taken.

Q. 67.—In this district fodder and grass was more than necessary for consumption, and a large quantity was exported to other districts.

Q. 70.—Village relief was allowed after a very careful selection by persons with local knowledge, and only those destitute persons who really deserved the relief were allowed it.

Q. 71.—In this district no poor-house was opened.

Q. 74.—Kitchens were opened.

Q. 75.—Ration was cooked and distributed once a day at noon at a particular place, and people were compelled to feed on the premises.

Q. 76.—Kitchens were opened at many places. If a kitchen was started at a famine relief camp, civil kitchen unconnected with camp was closed.

Q. 77.—Children and weak persons were admitted in the kitchen, and strangers also were allowed.

Q. 74. <sup>A</sup>In this district there were no poor-houses.

Q. 75. <sup>A</sup>Village gratuitous relief lists were drawn up by patwaris and Revenue Inspectors with the help of mukaddams and kotwars, and these were checked by Charge Officers and other Inspecting Officers.

Q. 76. <sup>A</sup>The payment was made in cash, in the presence of patwari, mukaddam and some other respectable men.

Q. 78.—Cooks belonged to the Brahmin class. Reluctance was shown by some high and low classes owing to caste prejudices. In my opinion uncooked food\* should be served to all strangers who are really needy and too weak for work and all such persons residing in the district brought on the village relief register.

\* To be cooked and eaten on the spot.

Q. 79.—Police, school-teachers and muharrirs were in the charge of the kitchen, and the Charge Officer used to inspect them.

Q. 80.—Cheap grain shops were opened for the benefit of those who were poor and whose earnings were very small.

Q. 81.—Cheap grain shops did not in any way discourage the importation of grain nor did they affect general prices.

Q. 82.—In this district the land revenue was suspended and not remitted. In my opinion, this should be remitted.

Q. 83.—Owing to the failure of rains a large area of land was not sown with rabi, and what was sown did not yield a good crop, but only a scanty crop. In the face of this fact land revenue was suspended, and malguzars were ordered to pay a certain amount of land revenue, and so also they were to realize a certain amount from their tenants. And before realizing this amount of rent from the tenants, the malguzars were ordered to prepare lists showing the amount to be realised from each tenant. Malguzars did this after taking into consideration both the facts, i. e., failure of crops and the circumstances of the tenants. And this was a good plan.

Q. 84.—In this district the order of the suspensions of land revenue was given at a proper time, i. e., before collection of revenue began.

Q. 85.—In this district the revenue of some villages was partly, and of others wholly, suspended. Malguzars decided the suspensions of revenue from the cultivators. Revenue Inspectors inspected and copied the lists.

Q. 86.—In this district the suspensions were of great value, and there had been no complaint within my knowledge of any such relief being abused or reaching the right person.

Q. 89.—The classes to which relief was administered included generally all kinds of cultivators and agricultural labourers.

Q. 90.—As the people were reduced to poverty owing to the famine of previous years, so in the very beginning, this year, they were ready to come on relief.

Q. 91.—So long as people had private resources or could contract debts, they did not come on relief. But those who could not or did not get credit, they came on relief at the very outset.

Q. 92.—The tests to prevent men, not in need of relief from seeking it, were rather more than sufficient.

Q. 99.—Many people supplemented their food with wild products and these were injurious to their health.

Q. 104.—No complaints in connection with the railways came to my notice.

Q. 105.—No complaints from employers of private labour, either agricultural or non-agricultural, of any difficulty in obtaining labour, owing to the attractions of relief works, came to my notice.

So long as the labourers could find employment in their village, they would not come to the relief work. In case they could not find any work in their village, they join the relief.

Q. 106.—There has been no such change so far as I am aware. In certain parts rabi (i. e., gram and masur) used to be sown on area on which *dhan* was grown, but in 1899 no such double-cropped area could be sown for want of moisture.

Q. 107.—Yes, in the villages of this district the practice of paying wages in grain prevails, and this is a general practice of paying wages. In case there is no grain available they substitute cash for grain wages, which is equivalent to the grain wages. This is never less than six pice a day.

Q. 110.—Non-official bodies worked, and the work was satisfactory and good.

Q. 112.—When the distress of famine is very keen, it is essential to start large works, but it would afford a boon, if small works, so far as practicable, be opened here and there. In this latter case those men can also get relief who rather prefer starving to going too long distances for relief with a view to preserve family and social ties and restraints. In this district small relief works were started and were of immense value.

JUBBULPORE:

The 5th January 1901.

BEHARI LALL,

Jubbulpore.



### RAI SAHIB SETH MOHAN LAL, MALGUZAR.

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I HAD works done in six or seven villages: field work was done. There were from 400 to 500 men employed who returned to their villages at harvest time. Kitchens were opened. They were intended specially for children, but the infirm and aged adults were admitted. People of the lower castes came in numbers, but those of the higher castes were reluctant to do so. The feeling against kitchens did not decrease in the case of the Bráhmíns and Kshattris as time wore on; but it decreased in the case of other castes, owing to stress of famine, those who came were persons who had no means whatever. No one came to kitchens who would have done without. Four to five pice worth of grain are the ordinary wages; last year wages were given in grain in smaller quantities than is usual. Labour has not been withdrawn. The digging of tanks and wells would be a good measure in Jubbulpore and beneficial to the crops. *Rayats* are greatly indebted owing to successive bad seasons; *málguzárs* are also in difficulties to a certain extent. Interest is levied at Re. 1 per 100 and Rs. 2 per 100 per mensem; Marwaris charge from Rs. 2 to 24 per cent. The rate depends upon the credit of the borrower.





Answers by RAI SAHEB SETH MOHANLAL, Khurai, to questions drawn up  
by the Famine Commission.

Q. 1.—When the rains of 1899 commenced the state of the district was far from satisfactory. From the year 1894 the crops in this district have continuously suffered and the condition of the district was going from bad to worse, and in the beginning of 1899 the state of the district was very miserable.

Q. 2.—The kharif sowings were up to normal, because there was good rain in the month of June.

Q. 3.—The actual rainfall in the rainy season of 1899 was only 37·5 per cent. of the average. The rains ceased in the month of July. The distribution of the rainfall compared with the average was—in June 25 per cent. and in the months of July, August and September 12·5 per cent.

Q. 4.—The actual kharif harvest of 1899 was 20 per cent. of the normal harvest on a normal cultivated area.

Q. 5.—60 per cent. of the total population of the district depends on agriculture.

Q. 6.—The necessity of relief was assumed from the fact of crop failure.

Q. 7.—Owing to the failure of the crops, year after year, the people of the district were in a distressed condition. Most of them were starving and it was thought necessary that relief works should be opened.

Q. 10.—Large public works and small village works were opened for purpose of relief. The programme was prepared on the spot.

Q. 14.—There is no necessity of irrigation wells in this district, because irrigation is of no use to the crops of this district.

Q. 60.—In this district relief was given in cash and through kitchens by means of cooked grain.

KHURAI:

3rd January 1901.

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SETH MOHANLAL.



MR. A. MAYNE, I.C.S., DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, SEONI.

*The President.*—You were the Deputy Commissioner of Seoni during the last famine?

A.—Yes, sir.

Q.—Would you call your district a famine district or a scarcity district?

A.—It actually consisted of three areas; one of acute famine where there was no crop at all; there was another area where there was a great deal of distress and no crop; and a third where only the labouring classes suffered from very high prices.

Q.—What was the population of the deeply distressed tract?

A.—120,000 of the rice tract proper, which had a complete failure of every kind of crop with one or two exceptions.

Q.—Did you often visit the relief works that were carried on in Seoni?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Could you say whether the people who came on the relief works were more from the rice tract than from the other?

A.—They came mainly from the rice tracts, the relief works all being there.

Q.—They did not move beyond that tract?

A.—Towards the latter part of the famine the camps had to be moved from 20 to 25 miles away from their homes. They went outside the rice tract.

Q.—You commenced with gratuitous relief. You had not much in the way of gratuitous relief till December. You commenced by making out the lists of infirm and old people, cripples and so on, in the villages. Did you extend the lists to the people beyond those who were indicated by physical infirmities as fit objects for gratuitous relief? Did you extend them to people who were said to be poor, whose protectors went to relief works; or did you make physical emaciation the test of your relief?

A.—Physical condition was kept throughout as the test.

Q.—Who selected the people for the lists? Was it decided by the village officer?

A.—The Circle Officer and the Village Inspector.

Q.—Did the *patwāris* or *mukaddams* first make out the list?

A.—In the beginning the Circle Officer himself made it out, but later on the *patwāri* made it out for him.

Q.—Well, you began with a list in September?

A.—I think it was the end of September.

Q.—Well, during the two months October and November you had on the list not more than 3,281 people. I suppose these 3,281 people were those who exhausted these categories. And next month it took a jump up to 11,000 people; what is the reason of this great increase of people?

A.—The reason was the expansion of distress; large numbers of people who were starving came on.

Q.—Were there any deaths from starvation in your district?

A.—No deaths reported.

Q.—But the condition of the people was getting worse?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You reached your maximum at the end of January? Then it dropped. What was the cause of that drop?

A.—The *rabi* harvest.

Q.—Would the *rabi* harvest have effect upon the people on gratuitous relief? Would it have effect upon cripples and so on?

A.—The bulk of the persons on gratuitous relief were young children, and when they were able to obtain a subsistence they were no longer in need of relief.

Q.—Their parents were on relief works?

A.—Frequently.

Q.—Well, then, your numbers remained low until April, May; and in June you reached the maximum. When people came back from the relief works in May they were put on gratuitous relief, and any persons allowed to go to the kitchens who pleased?

A.—I passed an express order that able-bodied persons would not be allowed to eat in kitchens unless they were unable to get work.

Q.—Were these orders that you mention issued because of any apprehension that people were having too free recourse to the kitchens?

A.—In the course of my inspection I visited several kitchens. In one kitchen I found 105 persons, but I found that only two were ready to work. There never had been free admission.

Q.—But at all events the numbers did go up; they went up from 10,000 to 15,000?

A.—That is in the most difficult time.

Q.—Were the labouring classes allowed to go to the kitchen in that time of transition?

A.—They were allowed as a general rule. There was no special list. The manager of the kitchen decided about the admission.

Q.—The manager of the kitchen was an officer of what stamp?  
A.—He was generally a *mālguzār*.  
Q.—What were the qualifications for admission to the kitchen?  
A.—In the case of children strict inquiry was necessary if they came within two miles.  
Q.—Except from a longer distance than two miles were they admitted without inquiry?  
A.—They were not admitted without inquiry, but that was taken into consideration.  
Q.—Does the same thing hold good with regard to doles?  
A.—Strict inquiry was always insisted on.  
Q.—Did people carry with them from the works a month's doles?  
A.—Only the infirm.  
Q.—Not the able-bodied?  
A.—No.  
Q.—And the able-bodied, when they got back, were allowed 15 days' free use of a kitchen?  
A.—I sent express instructions to the Circle Officer to go round each kitchen; and told him that he would be held responsible if any person was kept on there who could support himself.  
Q.—How do you account for the increase from 15,000 to 26,000 unless people were coming back from relief camps and admitted to kitchens?  
A.—There was an entire cessation of agriculture amongst that class until weeding began.  
Q.—Owing to that cessation they came on to the kitchens?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Had you any reason, Mr. Mayne, to think that the wages paid on relief works were more than need have been paid?  
A.—Yes. It was proved to be more, because we paid less.  
Q.—It is the custom of the country, I have been told, to pay men and women different wages for ordinary labour; the female coolie does not get as much as the male coolie?  
A.—They do different work.  
Q.—Do you think it is necessary for the purpose of supporting life that a female carrier should be paid as much as the male carrier?  
A.—I do not think it makes very much difference.  
Q.—Any reduction in the wages would be a saving to the State?  
A.—We effected a large reduction.  
Q.—You found that the Code scale of wages was much too liberal?  
A.—Yes. When *juār* was selling at 12½ *sérs*, I was calculating wages at 8 to 8½ *sérs*.  
Q.—Did the people thrive upon that wage?  
A.—They kept in excellent condition.  
Mr. Nicholson.—If you take a famine in time you can go on with much smaller wages than if you wait a little later?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—You consider that village works as a rule would be sufficient to provide for all able-bodied men?  
A.—If arrangements were made in time.  
Q.—How would you prevent everybody from coming on the village works?  
A.—By fixing the maximum wage, and by requiring tickets.  
Q.—Did you give reduced wages in village works as compared with the public works?  
A.—I was instructed to pay a pice less.  
Q.—Do you think in your district there is sufficient scope for village works?  
A.—As village work we did a section of the railway, and it was done well.  
Q.—Kitchens, I see, were generally managed by *mālguzārs* or big tenants?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Did they work well?  
A.—Very well on the whole.  
Q.—Were the accounts kept correctly?  
A.—There was a *moharrir* to keep the accounts, and they were strictly supervised.  
Q.—Do you think that you can extend that system and obtain the execution of the village works by the aid of a *panchayat*?  
A.—We had a considerable number of *mālguzārs* employed in running village works.  
Q.—In the case of the village works—the works under these circumstances were done well?  
A.—Very well done.  
Mr. Bourdillon.—From the close of the relief works to the breaking of the rains would it not have been possible to carry on relief works longer?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Is it a fact there was hardly any work in the villages?  
A.—There was very little work except for the regular ploughman. Very little for the extra class who rely on the weeding of the harvest.

Q. 23.—At the very beginning admission to the Public Works Department camps was free. But early in the famine the Commissioner ordered that all tenants possessing more than four cattle or a cart, or who had sown more than 5 acres of rabi were to be evicted, if their villages were within 5 miles of any part of the camp. This was done. Those evicted could go to a distant camp. They rarely did so, but supported themselves. From the time of this eviction no person living within 5 miles of a camp could obtain admission without a ticket issued by the Charge Officer of the tract. Such tickets were given to all applicants, save persons of the class evicted. Emaciated applicants needed no tickets.

Residence on the work was not insisted on. Later in the famine the transfer of camps to places 5 or 10 or more miles away made residence on the works compulsory for all who wished to stay on. I drafted several thousands of workers upwards of 20 miles from their homes.

Q. 34.—The Code scale of wages was much too liberal. I kept the workers in excellent condition on a scale of  $11\frac{1}{2}$  and  $12\frac{1}{2}$  seers when the cheapest grain was at 8 and  $8\frac{1}{2}$  seers. Had the workers come on in a feeble condition, this could not have been done.

The workers admitted large savings at the beginning before prices rose. They admitted some savings later on.

Much of the copper coin issued did not return to the banias on the works, as the workers used to spend part of their wages in villages near.

Q. 35.—A rest-day wage was given, save when it was desired to induce people to leave for the harvest work in the rabi tract 10 or 20 miles away.

Q. 38.—Payments were made daily. I should like to try by-weekly payments, except for new-comers.

Q. 40.—Payment was made to the head of the gang. In one case he absconded with the wages. I heard of no other complaint. I do not think payment to the individual desirable.

Q. 43.—Children at the breast were paid for, one pice each extra. Other children, not workers, were fed in the kitchens. The parents of ten preferred supporting them out of their earnings, and were allowed to do so unless the children were thin.

Q. 46.—I fixed the price scale. I disregarded small variations in price. After December I kept the price basis scale low, although prices gradually rose. Wheat and rice were the grains nominally taken into consideration, save in December, when a fall in *juari* to  $12\frac{1}{2}$  seers led to the adoption of that price as a general basis which was hardly departed from till the end of the famine.

Q. 48.—The Sub-Divisional Officer altered tasks subject to my general control. I raised the ordinary earthwork task from 73 to 80 cubic feet pit measurement, and lowered it only in the middle of the hot weather when the climate was trying.

I alone fixed the price scale, subject to the general control of the Commissioner. After December that control was relaxed, and prior sanction by him was not required. I was never overruled.

Q. 52.—Village works provided for all of the distress in the Karai tract and in the outlying portions of the Seoni tahsil and in the greater part of the Lakhnadon tahsil which was on the whole not acutely distressed.

Q. 53.—Village works were mainly the improvement of tanks. There were some five new tanks constructed and a section of railway line.

Q. 54.—The Public Works Department had no hand in them. The Assistant Commissioner, Tahsildars and Charge Officers managed them. A few were done through *malguzars*. These latter were as a rule petty works.

Q. 55.—The tahsil staff framed an estimate and measured the work when done, and once or twice in the interval. The *malguzar* was told what scale of wages to pay. He was responsible for paying at that rate. He received the cost in instalments, a report on the work being required before the grant of a fresh instalment.

Q. 89.—About one-quarter of the persons on relief were tenants and the like. The bulk of the rest were agricultural labourers and petty village artisans and craftsmen.

Q. 90.—The people were much more ready to come on relief than was the case in the last famine in the adjoining district of Balaghat. I attribute this entirely to familiarity with our famine system.

Q. 91.—Private credit was very contracted. It is still contracted. There was a decided reluctance to exhaust private resources before accepting State relief. Our tenants' eviction rules, framed by the Commissioner, brought about a healthy change in public opinion.

Q. 92.—No

Q. 93.—A promptly organized and carefully trained inspecting staff should suffice for the safe introduction of a rule that no person be given relief without a ticket from the inspecting officer, save children travelling over two miles to a kitchen; and even then a subsequent enquiry should be made at the first inspection visit. The one exception should be persons obviously emaciated.

The staff must be adequate. I think an increase in the number of our Famine Circle Officers from 16 to 24 for this district would be a real economy.

Selection for admission to most forms of relief has been proved here to be practicable.

Q. 94.—The kotwars report to the Police weekly.

Q. 95.—Our death-rate was steadily below normal, save when cholera came and shortly after. It was even then below normal wherever cholera (obviously imported) did not break out.

The condition of the people was on the whole so good that to any one who was not present at the time of starting a kitchen, or within a few weeks afterwards, it was possible that it would seem that the famine was not acute.

The year was a healthy one apart from famine and cholera, so healthy that the total death-rate was below the normal, (*vide* interesting chart in Famine Report).

Q. 96.—A large number of nals were bunded and kutcha wells dug. Regular weekly and bi-weekly disinfection of wells along the principal roads took place in the hot weather, and an attempt was made to disinfect all wells in villages where cholera broke out.

Q. 97.—On works, the usual sanitary arrangements prescribed by rule; at kitchens, no sanitary arrangements save when cholera broke out. Then the water was boiled and pots were disinfected.

Q. 98.—The Officer-in-charge generally paid adequate attention to the quality of grain sold. To reduce the exorbitant price, co-operative grinding by relief-workers was adopted with success at some camps. I punished severely one man for mixing earth with his flour.

Q. 99.—Many wild products were added to the regular diet, which are only eaten by a few people in ordinary times. When people are in good condition, they do not seem to suffer from the consumption of the numerous herbs, &c., eaten during the famine. Grasses, rather like the minor millets—kodon and sawa—supported more people than any other wild product not usually largely eaten.

Q. 100.—Practically no immigration.

Q. 102.—Few orphans. Mostly adopted by fellow-villagers. The balance, some 33, made over to the local mission.

Q. 103 and 104.—No.

Q. 104-(a).—I had only Municipal import, export and transit statistics, but I obtained at frequent intervals much general information regarding the movements of food-grains.

Q. 105.—In only one village did I hear that labourers could not be had for weeding. I had reason to believe the report to be false. I made frequent enquiries on the subject matter of this question.

Q. 106.—Little change in cropping likely to be permanent. Some rice land has come under minor millets. Juari has temporarily replaced wheat in some parts, as it ripens earlier. A marked decline in rabi in the deteriorated Ugli tract and some other parts. The cause is scarcity of seed or of the wherewithal to buy it.

Q. 107.—Grain wages still the rule.

Q. 110.—Non-officials gave invaluable service in the management of kitchens and of village works. A few public-spirited gentlemen helped in enquiries into claims for charitable grants to agriculturalists and in relief in Seoni town. Their work was good. I do not see much scope for its extension. Untrained men can rarely help in work requiring organisation as well as regular officials can.

Q. 112.—No, not markedly.

SEONI :  
The 4th January 1901. }

A. MAYNE,  
Deputy Commissioner.





MR. J. B. FULLER, C.I.E., I.C.S., COMMISSIONER, JUBBULPORE  
DIVISION.

Q.—When did you join your Division, Mr. Fuller ?

A.—In June 1897.

Q.—You had experience of the Division before the recent famine ?

A.—Yes ; during the famine of 1896-97.

Q.—On the whole what was the character of the four crops before the famine ?

A.—I should not like to answer that question definitely without figures ; but I should say generally that the *kharif* of 1897 was on the whole a good one ; there was especially good *juar*, and rice was fair. The *rabi* of 1898 was on the whole bad owing to the failure of the October rains. The *kharif* of 1898 was also on the whole a bad one ; the rainfall was very heavy while it lasted and the crops suffered. The *rabi* again was bad ; the area sown was very small, and the crops were poor, so poor that we had to give very large remissions indeed in Saugor.

Q.—On the whole was your Division not able to recover completely from the effects of the famine of 1897 ?

A.—It made very small progress. I may say that for the last seven years the average yield in two of the five districts (Saugor and Damoh) has been below 50 per cent.

Q.—Last year your Division was more of a scarcity than of a famine division ?

A.—It is very difficult to say exactly what is famine and what is scarcity. It is a matter of terms. It may be called acute scarcity or not very acute famine.

Q.—Compared with the population, your numbers are fewer than those in some other districts, some of the most seriously affected districts. For instance in the Mandla district you had no people on relief works up till May ; and in May very few. In fact in the Mandla district you never got over 10,000 except in one month, August ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And on gratuitous relief you had a very moderate number up till May. Your largest number was 6,000 in April. Then it went to 15,000 in May and 31,000 in June and July and then you diminished. And yet Mandla district is called a scarcity district in contradistinction to other districts ?

A.—In Mandla they got some rice ; there was scarcity till February or March ; but it would be quite wrong if I allowed it to be accepted that in Mandla there was no famine.

Q.—It cannot have been very acute or the proportion of the population on relief would have been higher ?

A.—I think it rose to 12 per mille.

Q.—It rose to 14 per cent. in August ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In the same way in Jubbulpore, Mr. Fuller, your highest figure was 13 per cent. of the population. It was 13·6 in June and 13·5 in July. In Seoni the highest that you reached was 16 per cent. in January and it immediately fell ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Would you therefore be disposed to say that yours was a scarcity division ?

A.—I am afraid I could not admit that ; I should say that there was scarcity throughout the Division, and in some parts there was acute famine during part of the year.

Q.—You first commenced to have fears in July ?

A.—Well, we began some form of relief in Saugor in the previous March.

Q.—We are informed by Mr. Cleveland that you had gratuitous relief in Saugor the whole of 1899 ?

A.—On a small scale, on a very small scale.

Q.—You had 5,000 people on gratuitous relief in Saugor ?

A.—Yes

Q.—When did you first begin to anticipate famine in 1899 ?

A.—Up to the 23rd July rain was excellent. I became nervous about the 15th August, and more than nervous at the end of August : the prospects of the crop seemed extremely bad.

Q.—Did you take part in the conference of officers in August ?

A.—No.

Q.—Was your Division in any way represented at that conference ?

A.—No, if I remember rightly.

Q.—There was a conference on the 10th of August, and orders of the Local Government were issued on the 14th August on which the famine policy of the administration was based ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And we have evidence in other Divisions that the officers commenced to take action under these orders in August and that they practically had a rough scheme of famine relief organized by the end of August or early in September. I want to know when you first took active steps to organize your relief ?

A.—I did not take any active steps till the end of September. We had some correspondence on the subject towards the end of September.

Q.—There were some people on gratuitous relief in Seoni at the end of September?

A.—Yes; on a small scale.

Q.—In Jubbulpore you had gratuitous relief on a very small scale, and you kept the figure low until November, and then you began to run up?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In Mandla you did not begin relief works until December?

A.—On a very small scale.

Q.—In Saugor you started with 5,000 people in relief from previous months and in October you ran up to 11,000 and in November you ran up to 13,000. That represents your initial step of relief, gratuitous relief?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You abandoned the system of test-works?

A.—Yes, it was practically abandoned. I agreed with the policy of abandonment; we got orders in this sense, and I agreed with them.

Q.—You were acting under the instructions of the Local Government?

A.—Yes. The policy was at the commencement of famine to give help to weakly incapables who could not possibly work.

Q.—Up to this occasion the practice has been not to assume the existence of distress from the fact of crop failure, but to test the existence of distress by proofs of actual privation among the labouring classes?

A.—My belief is that the test-works led the Administration to grief in 1896, for when they were opened nobody went to them, although the people were in great distress. The result was that there was an extraordinary mortality. I do not believe in test-works. In my opinion they are either too strict or too liberal. It requires a great deal of skill and judgment to so manage works as to make them a test of distress. I do not think that at the commencement of famine we have men really capable of managing them efficiently.

Q.—Do you think that the proper famine policy would be to abandon test-works altogether, and that gratuitous relief should bridge over the period until regular relief works are opened?

A.—Yes; I do.

Q.—I assume your answer is that you would prefer the abandonment of test-works and the acceptance of the policy of gratuitous relief subject to proper qualifications?

A.—Yes, in the early days of famine.

Q.—Now we come to the qualifications with which you would hedge round gratuitous relief. Do you think that gratuitous relief should be administered on the basis of any self-acting test or entirely on the basis of selection, of individual selection?

A.—It is a very difficult question.

Q.—It lies at the root of the whole policy which you now advocate?

A.—The practical answer to that question is that we should open kitchens.

Q.—I want to know whether in maintaining the policy of gratuitous relief you would rely upon the self-acting test?

A.—More or less.

Q.—That is to say you would rely upon the assumed reluctance—I do not say it would not be correct to call it real reluctance—on the part of the people to go to kitchens if they had any other means to support themselves?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think that the reluctance of the people to go to kitchens is a sufficient safeguard against the abuse of gratuitous relief?

A.—Yes, coupled with certain powers of selection on the part of the people administering the kitchens, who should ascertain the capacity to work of any labourers that come to the kitchen. I am talking of what, in vulgar phrase, we call the “brass-pot paupers,” who should not be admitted. Except at the beginning of distress when a test is wanted I would never let the kitchens be open to everyone who sought admission. I would certainly give certain powers of selection.

Q.—You would be disposed to modify the general form of your answer and you would say that there should be a self-acting test subject to selection where possible?

A.—Yes; exactly. In the beginning of famine the untrustworthy character of general information renders some test necessary. I can give an instance from Mandla. There was an outcry for works in October, but I refused to open them till kitchens filled. The result was that we had not to open any works at all till June. They were not really wanted. The death-rate remained below normal.

Q.—You would have kitchens established in villages where you find people call for them?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You would be disposed to limit the radius which one particular kitchen should supply?

A.—I am in favour of a radius of three miles.

Q.—You would then have kitchens and admission should be by selection? Do you mean that selection should be made by a man's personal appearance?

A.—And local knowledge.

Q.—You would have kitchens to supply the wants of villages that fall within a three miles radius of it?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You would require to have personal acquaintance with the facts of each person living in the village in order to effect selection?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You prefer kitchens to a distribution of cash doles or grain doles?

A.—Yes.

Q.—We had it from a witness yesterday that the cheaper way of distributing gratuitous relief in a village would be to distribute cash or grain doles provided the selection was made by a reliable *panchayat*. He told us the village people do not cheat each other in the matter of gratuitous relief?

A.—I think such a system would work fairly well. But my experience is that there is a lot of swindling. I introduced a rule that village relief should not be given till the relieving officer had visited the applicants' homes and seen what sort of houses they lived in. That caused a large reduction in numbers. Careful enquiry is necessary to ensure that relief is not given to the dependants of well-to-do people, living in their houses. The tendency is strong to put one's household servants on relief.

Q.—Do you think that the unwillingness to take cooked food in the kitchens rapidly-disappeared?

A.—Yes, that was certainly the most curious thing in this famine. I know of a case in Damoh where not more than five people attended the kitchen for four months. When I left the division in April the kitchen was not full. In the hot weather the numbers rose to about 100, and when I came back in August I found there were 400 people there. Undoubtedly that was on account of their becoming accustomed to taking cooked food. But the period when the numbers in the kitchens rose so enormously was the period when mortality always rises in these Provinces. If you look to the death-rate of 1895 you will find that in Jubbulpore we ran up to 10 per mille. In 1896, in Damoh, you will find a very high death-rate; it was actually higher in 1896 than in 1897, when our maximum was 6 per mille; in 1895 and 1896 it reached I think 9 monthly. I do not for a moment imply that no one was in kitchens who ought not to have been there. But I do say that the extraordinary readiness to accept kitchen relief was in the main an indication of distress. I have not the smallest hesitation in saying that.

Q.—Of course it is quite right to provide gratuitous relief for the dependant class. I admit that at once. But with regard to those who had not been on gratuitous relief, do you not think that they should be subjected to a strict system of personal selection, and that no person should be admitted into the kitchens who was declared by the local and village agency to be able to support himself; or do you think that admission to the kitchens should be free and that anybody should be able to go and get a meal in the kitchens?

A.—I do not like to seem to criticise the policy of the administration. I should say that the fact that so many adults came on for relief was sufficient to show that the condition of the people was extremely bad in June and July. The delay in the arrival of the monsoon threw the officers of Government and the people into despair, and this led to a large increase in the kitchen attendance. A very curious phenomenon was that a large number of adults who would possibly have been weeding in a good season came to kitchens and lived on charity. No one who was not in these provinces at the time could realize the extreme dependence of those two months. Men's hearts failed them for fear.

Q.—So far as the question of policy was concerned, you would be disposed to say that admission to gratuitous relief in a village should not in future be regulated by any self-regulated or self-acting tests, but that it should be based on personal selection in every instance?

A.—Except in the very beginning I cannot agree with the policy of absolutely free admission. It would be a mistake except in the initial stage of distress to let admission to kitchens be entirely self-regulated.

Q.—There is the question of wages. You know that under the orders of the Commission of General Strachey in 1880, a certain scale of wages was laid down for famine relief and certain scale of subsistence allowance for dependants in poorhouses. The sufficiency of that scale was questioned by the Commission of 1898 who proposed a more liberal scale?

A.—Yes.

Q.—That more liberal scale was adopted in these Provinces this time?

A.—Yes.

Q.—We are told here by officers that that scale is too liberal. In the report submitted to us by Mr. St. Clair it appears that, as a rule, the labourers never did earn a full wage. In some districts they earned 70 to 75 per cent. of the full wage and in others 75 to 80 per cent. or 80 to 90 per cent. of the full wage, and in only one or two districts they earned over 90 per cent. I asked one of the Engineers—a witness here—whether the fact that there was this shortage of earning—it has been called fining in some places, but I do not regard it as fining; it is mere payment for work done—should be taken as an indication that the wage paid is too high. We had it in evidence here that the workers on relief works prospered, their health was good on relief works and there was no emaciation. For instance, in the Chanda district the maximum earnings were 88 per cent., in the Bhandara district 90 per cent., and in the Nimar district 75 per cent. So you see about 20 per cent. of the wages seems to be redundant?

A.—So far as my experience about wages goes, I can say that the workers will always save something. If you pay them high wages they will eat wholesome food and save; and if you pay them low wages they will eat unwholesome food and save.

Q.—We had it in evidence that the labourers did not buy their food on the works, but they bought in the neighbourhood of their villages because they could buy it cheaper?

A.—Yes, the scale of wages is too liberal.

Q.—Is that the general impression?

A.—Yes; that the scale of wages is too high.

Q.—Mortality in your division was exceptionally small up till July?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were there any signs of demoralization among the people who received gratuitous relief? Did they return to their agricultural pursuits?

A.—Certainly they did.

Q.—We have the evidence of some native gentlemen that the landlords and cultivators were anxious to get labourers; but they did not get them or that they had to compete with the kitchens?

A.—That is true to some extent.

Q.—But your opinion is that there were no signs of demoralization among the cultivators and that cultivation has been resumed?

A.—The effect in my Division of the good rainfall of October has been a most extraordinary recovery; indeed one Deputy Commissioner has said that there are no signs of the famine remaining: this may exaggerate but the general condition is satisfactory.

Q.—A full normal area has been sown?

A.—No. Seven years cannot be recovered in one year; but we are making good progress.

Q.—Can you give the Commission any suggestion in regard to suspensions or remissions? Do you think your rules are adequate?

A.—I think they are quite adequate. I am of opinion that suspensions are the best method of famine relief for the better class of tenants. My policy has always been to direct our relief works to labourers and very small tenants. It will be quite sufficient if you let off the tenants their rents.

Q.—Suspensions in the Central Provinces altogether were very large?

A.—Yes. In Jubbulpore we suspended 75 per cent.: suspensions were in this district in exact proportion to the crops. The crops in Jubbulpore were 25 per cent.

Q.—Would you establish any connection between your ticket system and suspension of revenue?

A.—Yes. I think it would be very bad in times of famine to ask people to pay their rents. I have in my own experience observed that not infrequently the *mālguzārs* collected their rents at the back of the relief works.

Q.—Did you find that this year?

A.—No.

Q.—You commenced your suspensions at a very early stage?

A.—We had the result declared by April.

Q.—Up to March you suspended Rs. 21,64,000?

A.—Yes; we had the whole thing done by the end of March; we told the people by the end of March what they would have to pay in May.

Q.—In making your suspensions you assumed the fact that crop failure is a sufficient justification for suspension? You did not look into the capacity of the individual to pay revenue by some other means, before making suspensions?

A.—Suspensions were not in all cases necessary; but you cannot suspend rent without suspending revenue. The tenant is tied to the *mālguzār* and the *mālguzār* is tied to you; if you take revenue the *mālguzār* takes rent.

Q.—Would you in this matter draw any distinction between suspensions and remissions?

A.—I think they are undistinguishable. I hope the whole amount suspended will be remitted. I think we must regard remissions as part and parcel of famine relief.

Q.—I suppose you have some *rayatwāri* tracts in these Provinces?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were the suspensions in these tracts based on the crop failure? Or did you look into the circumstances of each individual tenant to see whether he was able to pay revenue from some other source assuming that the crops failed?

A.—I would go simply on the crop failure.

Q.—The question is—should not suspensions be greater or less according to the capacity of the individual to pay irrespective of the crop failure?

A.—I would rather not commit myself to any one opinion. So far as the *mālguzārs* are concerned it would be hard on them if the rent were suspended and not the revenue.

Q.—If you accept the policy of scrutinizing the affairs of individuals you will allow great scope to misconduct on the part of your subordinates?

A.—Undoubtedly. As regards the *mālguzārs* the Deputy Commissioner can deal with them; but as regards the *rayat*, you must depend upon the *patwāri*.

Answers by J. B. FULLER, Esq., I. C. S., C. I. E., Commissioner, Jubbulpore  
Division, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

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I propose to touch on paper with three points only of those arising from the questions of the Famine Commission :—

- (1) Admission to relief works.
- (2) Small works as opposed to large works.
- (3) Kitchens as a test of distress and as a means of relief.

These points may be taken as arising respectively from questions Nos. 23 and 93, 52 and 57, and 8 and 74.

#### ADMISSION TO RELIEF WORKS.

Q. 23 and 93.—The accepted safeguards against indiscriminate relief may be summarized as (1) the work test, (2) the distance test, and (3) the disinclination of people to submit to the strange conditions of a relief work. I am of opinion that these safeguards do not suffice to exclude from relief works very large number of persons who stand in no real need of charity. The inspection of a relief work commonly leads one to a conclusion that a large proportion of the workers have no business to be there,—indeed women are not rarely to be found wearing strings of rupees. Detailed enquiries which I made on a large work in the Saugor District, showed that over a third of the workers belonged to families which possessed a means of livelihood in considerable numbers of surplus cattle, for which there was a ready sale at a mart close by; and investigations made on other works last January led to similar conclusions. Villages lying near relief works are commonly to be found completely deserted after 9 in the morning, the whole of the population having enlisted itself in the gangs or on the staff.

The work test is unreliable because it is so often ineffective. In the first place, the task must be fixed sufficiently low to be within the powers of those who are weakened by days of short commons, and it is accordingly very light for the strong. Secondly, it is generally almost impossible to properly task the large number of women who work as carriers and are in excess of the proper proportion to the diggers. Thirdly, a very large portion of the labourers on a large relief work must be practically untasked; the persons employed in miscellaneous work connected with conservancy, water-supply and the construction and maintenance of the camp have very light duties. The gang mates though nominally reckoned in the task calculations seldom touch a mattock, and as they have sufficient influence to protect their womenkind, they and their families, when gangs are small, consume in idleness a large proportion of the gang wages—not infrequently as much as a seventh. Lastly, and this is of great importance, when people come in large numbers it is impossible for days together to enforce any task at all, and one meets with the demoralizing spectacle of hundreds, or even thousands, of persons drawing pay for sitting alongside a road-way and tempting by their experience hundreds of others to join them.

The distance test is of more value. It takes a good deal to press a family to leave its home and sleep in the open or in rough shanties. Thus it is found that the percentage of the population which comes to a work rapidly falls as distance increases. It may be assumed that a work serves an area of from 200 to 250 square miles. The result of several censuses I have had taken showed that generally more than half and in some cases as many as two-thirds of the workers had their homes within an inner area of about 50 square miles. But I have found that the distance test loses force as familiarity with famine works increases. There is after all no very great hardship to the people of this country in camping out, especially when they come in family parties. The distance test is more reliable than the work test. But it is very far from completely discriminating: and it only affects a portion of the population served by the work.

During the famine of 1896-97, suspicion of the conditions of a relief work, apprehensions of insult, or even outrage and the fear of losing social status, operated very powerfully indeed to keep the well-to-do from applying for relief. It is to be feared indeed that they deterred the destitute also. But circumstances have now changed. Famine employ is no longer novel and village society accepts it as no longer degrading. I doubt whether during this famine this consideration has acted at all. As already noted, I have often found the entire population of a village on a work.

Something more is required and I advocate the greater use of deliberate discrimination on the part of the officers of Government. It is indeed little short of ridiculous that we should grant charity to persons who are obviously undeserving of it merely because we cannot get rid of them by any automatic test. The usual expedient is to lower the rate of wages by assuming a cheaper price rate than that actually ruling. But this is dangerous for those who are really in want. And during the slack months of the year, people who have other means of support will accept a wage which would barely maintain them. I believe that if present procedure was so far modified as to allow of discrimination in admitting to relief, the mere enunciation of this principle would go far to restrict our works to those who really need them. Native subordinates are quick in catching hold of general lines of policy, and I think that the wideness of our charity has been largely due to the idea that Government wished to give to all who came. The principle of discrimination once admitted, various expedients could no doubt be devised for giving it effect. For myself, I see no reason why the opening of a work should not be preceded by enquiries in, at all events, villages within a certain distance of it, the people being mustered and tickets of admission being given according to ascertained condition. At the outset, only the labouring classes would be admitted, later on, as distress intensified, tickets would be given further up the social scale. Village enquiries of this kind, which were hardly contemplated by the drafters of the original Famine Code, were successfully undertaken in the North-Western Provinces, and later on in these Provinces, during the famine of 1896-97, for the purpose of granting village relief; and subsequent experience has shown me that no great difficulty attends their use as a means of regulating admission to relief works. More Famine Officers may be required. But their salaries would be saved many times over.

Such enquiries would not only exclude the undeserving, they would ensure the relief of the destitute. Persons enfeebled by privation will often not face the crowd round the relief camp enlistment flag, and starve till past assistance. An assurance of admission by possession of a ticket would give them heart to apply.

I was allowed in the Jubbulpore Division to regulate admission to relief work by selection. So far as the large public works relief works were concerned, this authority was obtained after they had been opened, and the plan followed was to enquire into the circumstances of families who came from a distance of 4 miles or less, and to eliminate all those who possessed resources of their own, giving tickets to the remainder. Subsequent admission from villages within this distance was by ticket only, obtainable from the Charge Officer (who visited the villages every eight or ten days), and in special cases from the Officer-in-charge of the work. Facts, which were held to indicate that State assistance might be withheld, were the possession of two or more head of cattle other than plough-cattle, of a cart, or of as much as 5 acres of land sown with rabi crops. But these *criteria* were not prescribed as exhaustive, and it was left to Deputy Commissioners to give further instructions for the guidance of enquiring officers. The general result was to confine the works to labourers and quite petty tenants.

Elimination was a more difficult task than original selection would have been, as the people were away from their villages and it was necessary to re-group them. But with the presence of the patwari and mukaddam, no great difficulty was experienced in getting at facts, and experiments made by myself showed that a morning's work would dispose of the cases of about 1,000 persons. This procedure was in force from February onwards in the Jubbulpore and Seoni districts, and less completely in the Saugor District. It has proved a success—numbers having been kept down and “rushes” checked, without any bad effect whatever on the condition of the people. In Jubbulpore, the areas served by these works were severely distressed rather than famine-stricken. But in Seoni conditions were those of actual famine.

To village works in this Division admission has from the outset been controlled by selection. Works of this class were used throughout the Division for the relief of areas which saved some part of their crops: and in two tracts—the Murwara tahsil of Jubbulpore and the Khurai pargana of Seoni—were solely relied upon as a means of relieving distress, which was really acute from the outset. Both these tracts rely on rice and in both rice failed altogether. In both, distress was fully met by the admission of no very considerable numbers to relief. The population of Murwara is 173,308: rice, its main kharif crop, failed entirely and very little rabi was sown. Conditions were, I should say, quite as bad as in 1896. I give below the percentage of the population on relief at certain periods:—

Period.				PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION ON RELIEF.			
				Work relief.	Kitchens.	Village relief.	Total.
End of January 1900	...	...	...	4.7	1.8	1.8	8.3
“ March ”	...	...	...	5.2	1.9	1.0	8.1
“ May ”	...	...	...	12.5	3.1	1.1	16.7
“ July ”	...	...	...	4.7	5.9	2.9	13.5

Famine conditions were completely controlled: the mortality did not exceed the normal and we had not to open a poor-house.

### SMALL WORKS AS OPPOSED TO LARGE WORKS.

Q. 52 and 57.—Experience in this Division has shown that village works, with admission by selection, are a most satisfactory means of providing employment in tracts where distress is not very severe: it has also given ground for the opinion that under certain conditions we should do well to trust to village works entirely for the relief of tracts in which a state of acute famine prevails. These conditions are; firstly, that no large project is available of real and definite utility, and, secondly, that the country affords scope for the employment of labour in excavating tanks or embanking land. There is much more scope for tank excavation than might be supposed. In rice-growing tracts sites for the storage of water are to be found without difficulty, and there are numerous existing tanks to be improved. Elsewhere, save in quite hilly country, enquiries will as a rule indicate numbers of ponds and small tanks which can be improved and enlarged. A village work can most suitably employ from 700 to 1,000 persons. Where the population is as crowded as 800 to the square mile a village work to every six square miles would provide employment for a fifth of the population, and very few patches of country of this size would be found without sites for the excavation of two or three tanks. No doubt a large number of these tanks will not serve to irrigate. But they are of great use for watering cattle and the various purposes collectively known as *nistar*. They are of more value to the country than most of the roads which have been made by famine labour.

Village works are much more popular than large works because they relieve distress with more humanity. If managed (as they should be) on the "single-digger" system, families work apart and the women are not subjected to annoyance by strangers. The workers all return home at night and are not promiscuously herded together in camp barracks. There are practically no "ineffective" charges for camp buildings, camp establishment and camp equipage, and almost the whole of the outlay goes in wages. This (with the fact that tasks are invariably completed) renders village works very economical: in the Jubbulpore District the cost rate works out to actually less than the normal. The provision of drinking water, which is so difficult and expensive on large works, is on village works a simple matter. There is less liability to cholera and attacks are localized. In Jubbulpore where cholera broke out on the large works, village works escaped altogether. Lastly, village works serve a most useful purpose in discouraging immigration and wandering. Admission being limited to ticket-holders, outsiders have no hope of getting employ.

### KITCHENS.

Q. 8 and 74.—There was an extraordinary contrast between the attendance at kitchens during the early portion of the famine and during the rains. At the outset even low-caste children needed persuasion, whereas during August and September, special measures were required to exclude undeserving adults. I believe that the growing popularity of kitchens merely reflected the growing intensity of distress. It is during the rains that the resources and resisting power of the labouring classes are at their lowest, and the vital statistics of 1895, 1896 and 1897 show that it is at this season of the year that scarcity of food is most fatal to mankind. A very large expansion in kitchen relief was only to be expected during the monsoon months, and I have no doubt whatever that it was this expansion that was responsible for the extraordinary difference between the monsoon death-rates of this and the preceding famine. No doubt the rush to kitchens carried with it numbers who could have made shift for themselves, and that the acceptance of cooked food lost by force of example the discredit which ordinarily attaches to it. But I do not believe that there has been a permanent change in this respect in the feelings of the people, or that in times of prosperity kitchens would attract more than a very few.

Experience has, I think, shown that kitchens are the best available means of gauging distress and of relieving it at the outset, and I would make the establishment of test kitchens the first measure to be undertaken when distress is imminent. They are more reliable than test works which are apt to mislead through over-strictness or over-liberality in management. It is easy to cook food and offer it: but to manage a test work properly needs more experience than is available at the commencement of a famine. A kitchen does not offer the temptation of saving money. The sudden and often preposterous rise in prices which speculation produces on a widespread crop failure naturally excites intense anxiety and there arises a clamour for relief, whether it is really required at the time or not. Native officials are carried on the current and I do not remember a single instance in which a Tahsildar has not lent his voice to the popular outcry. Had I trusted to local opinion, works would have been opened in the Mandla and Damoh districts in October 1899, and much money would have been wasted. I insisted on kitchen attendance as a test of distress, with the result that in neither district was much money spent till the rains. Village works were opened gradually in the localities where kitchens filled. The death-rate in both districts was below the normal.



As a means of relieving famine, I rank kitchens very highly indeed. Distress does not strike all classes simultaneously; the first sufferers are the destitute dependants on village charity who evidence the commencement of a famine by crowding into the towns and render poor-houses the initial measure of relief. Kitchens, if opened at the very beginning of distress, arrest these people in their villages and keep them there. Later on as distress spreads upwards, labourers and petty tenants find in kitchens a means of keeping their children in food and can spend on themselves the whole of such earnings as they make on relief works or elsewhere. If relief works are closed during the rains—a course I should always recommend—kitchens must provide for a large number of adults during this season. I see no objection to this. Gratuitous relief is much less costly and not more demoralizing than relief in return for work which the weather does not permit us to exact. It is also much more effective. Exposure on relief works during the monsoon is a fruitful cause of disease and mortality.

I see no reason why kitchen-relief should not be limited by discretion or should be necessarily open to the objections which apply to indiscriminate charity. If once the principle is laid down that only those are to receive food who need it and cannot earn it, our native officials can quite readily check a tendency to seek the kitchen dole in preference to field work. Indeed I think that admission might throughout be limited to ticket-holders as was the case in this Division till the rains broke. But a current idea as to the policy of Government is of itself a powerful check. Careful discrimination in all branches of famine relief was specially observed in the Jubbulpore and Seoni districts, and these districts experienced no such rush of adults to kitchens during the rains as occurred in some places.

As regards the efficiency of kitchen relief, I think it preferable to the distribution of cash doles. The desire to save is not driven out of humanity by the extremest misery and paupers commonly starve themselves in order to hoard part of their cash allowances. The money paid for children commonly does not reach them, and I have had many practical illustrations of the benefit of cutting children off the village cash list and sending them to a kitchen. It must be remembered moreover that a large proportion of the incapables who are given gratuitous relief cannot cook for themselves and have no one to help them. I believe that with a proper system of kitchen relief, cash doles need only be given very sparingly indeed, and this opinion has been strongly supported by the experience of the Saugor District. But firmness is necessary at the outset, for if paupers think that cash doles are within expectation they will submit to much deprivation in order to secure them.

It is essential that the food given in kitchens should be easily cooked and should even, if badly cooked, be fairly digestible. *Chapattis* are quite unsuitable and some sort of porridge or *khichri* must be adopted. During the past famine the ration has always been a mixture of rice and *dal*: but I think that in tracts where rice is not grown this diet may not have suited adults who have grown accustomed to other grain; and it would be well in future famines to substitute *juari* porridge or *kodon* gruel (*pej*) for the rice *khichri* in tracts which mainly feed their poorer classes on millet.

On one point there can be no doubt that the grant of relief in kitchens has been the most popular feature of the famine and has excited feelings of real gratitude. All classes are alike in this view and I have had a Pandit mention to me that our favourable rains of this year were the consequences attributed\* in the "Bhagavadgita" to a sacrifice or oblation of cooked food to others.

JUBBULPORE: }  
The 6th January 1901. }

J. B. FULLER,

Commissioner,  
Jubbulpore Division.

\* The passage occurs in Chapter III. But I fear that my friend's construction goes beyond the text.



*The President*.—How long have you been Deputy Commissioner of Jubbulpore?

A.—Since March 1897.

Q.—Then you have been through both famines?

A.—Yes; a part of the first famine and this one. I was also here for four months in 1896.

Q.—Generally speaking, which famine was the more severe, the famine of 1897 or the famine of 1899?

A.—The famine of 1897.

Q.—Do you attribute that to the fact that the famine of 1897 followed on a succession of bad years, or to the fact that the actual crop failure in 1897 was greater than that of 1899?

A.—Chiefly to the first cause.

Q.—Was your district able to recover to any extent during 1898?

A.—Not altogether. The crops were not really very good during the intervening year. The Jubbulpore district depends largely on the *rabi*, and in the intervening year there was no cold weather rain.

Q.—Was the actual crop failure greater in 1899 or in 1897?

A.—I could not say exactly. The failure in 1899 was very great owing to the rice and lesser millets being a complete failure. The *rabi* area was only half the amount usually sown.

Q.—In your opinion the pressure on the people was greater in 1897 than in 1899?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think that result was due to the fact of your having taken things in hand earlier in 1899 than in 1897?

A.—Yes, I do. The pressure was less in 1899 than in 1897 owing to the fact that we were prepared.

Q.—The number of people who came on your hands in 1899 was less than in 1897?

A.—Yes.

Q.—So that the inference you draw is that timely preparation and timely action diminishes the strain upon Government in the event of a crop failure?

A.—I do.

Q.—The preparations and preliminary inquiries instituted in your district followed the general plan adopted for the Province?

A.—Yes.

Q.—That is to say that the first warning note was sounded in the beginning of August?

A.—Not in Jubbulpore. The note was sounded in September, I think; nothing was done in August.

Q.—Nothing even in the way of preparation?

A.—No; we had a shower of rain in August.

Q.—Did you receive the orders of the 14th of August?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you take no action in August?

A.—We hoped things would mend.

Q.—Did you not begin making relief circles, &c.?

A.—Relief circles were not formed till September. We did not begin till the end of September.

Q.—The figures show that you took no active steps until October?

A.—Yes, until the latter part of October.

Q.—You first took active steps then in November?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What were the first active steps you took? Was it in the way of offering labour or establishing gratuitous relief?

A.—The two steps were begun almost simultaneously. We had arranged to open some kitchens about the end of October and also to give village relief in some tracts about the beginning of November. We opened a relief camp on the 13th of November in the worst tract.

Q.—Were they test-works or regular relief works?

A.—They were regular relief works.

Q.—You had no test-works?

A.—No.

Q.—Was gratuitous relief given in the way of kitchens or in doles distributed in the villages?

A.—In both ways.

Q.—Were you able to institute a comparison between the efficaciousness of the dole system and the efficaciousness of the kitchen system?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Which was the more acceptable to the people?

A.—The kitchen system to the people as regards children, but gratuitous relief was undoubtedly more acceptable as regards grown-up people. In Jubbulpore during the famine there was a disinclination to go to kitchens on the part of grown-up people.

Q.—Could you form a comparison as to which would be the more expensive to Government: I am restricting myself to adults?

A.—I think the kitchen system would have just turned the scale against Government.

Q.—They would be less economical than doles ?

A.—Yes, that is for adults generally.

Q.—I understand you to say the kitchen system was more acceptable as regards children ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did the people have to send their children long distances to kitchens ?

A.—No, not when the kitchens were established.

Q.—What distance did the children have to go ?

A.—About 3 miles.

Q.—Were there any complaints ever made to you in regard to their having to go that distance ?

A.—No. In the rains there was some difficulty about crossing nálas.

Q.—During the dry weather there was no complaint ?

A.—No.

Q.—As regards children from 2 to 3 years of age, could they get to kitchens ?

A.—They were generally carried or helped along by their bigger brothers and sisters.

Q.—The adult people did not bring them to kitchens ?

A.—No, in our kitchens the adults who came were very feeble people, who could scarcely bring themselves there. The elder children managed to take the younger ones there.

Q.—Was there any shelter attached to the kitchens ?

A.—Yes, in every case.

Q.—Used the children to remain there or return to their homes ?

A.—They returned to their homes.

Q.—Were their meals given to them once or twice a day ?

A.—Once, in the first part of the year at 12 o'clock in the day, but in the hot weather at 9 o'clock.

Q.—Did you find any children of the better classes coming to the kitchen ?

A.—Children of the more substantial class hardly ever came to the kitchens. Rules were introduced to exclude children of the better class, but they hardly ever came, and it was scarcely necessary to bring the rules into operation.

Q.—Did that characterize the kitchens throughout ?

A.—Yes, up to the rains.

Q.—You did not find that children of the more substantial cultivating classes came to kitchens ?

A.—No.

Q.—Then your works were opened. You began with a moderate number ? There were 7,400 on the works in November: in December you sprang up to 17,000. In January there were 29,000. Then there was a considerable drop, and the same thing is apparent in the figures of gratuitous relief. You sprang up from 9,000 in November to 15,000 in December and 19,000 in January and fell to 12,000 in February. The fall on works was from 29,000 to 15,000 and from 19,000 to 12,000 on gratuitous relief. What was the reason of that ?

A.—The chief reason was that the *rábí* harvest came in very early. In many places the gram was ready to cut and was being cut in the early part of February.

Q.—Gram was then 14 seers to the rupee, was it not ?

A.—I should think not so much. The harvest attracted numbers from the works. At the same time a system of selection was introduced, I think about the middle of February. I think the people had gone to the harvest first and that the selection system was then brought in.

Q.—Did you do anything to urge the people to leave relief works ? Did you stiffen or lower the wages ?

A.—No.

Q.—Then you introduced the selection system ?

A.—Yes, to deal with people returning from the harvest.

Q.—What was the selection system ?

A.—It was something as follows. The Civil Charge Officer visited the work and inspected those labouring. He had with him the *Patwári*, Revenue Inspector, or Circle Officer, and some of the chief men of the surrounding villages. They went over the gangs and each man was called up with his dependents and they were told to sit separately. Inquiry was then held as to his means of subsistence ; on that the Charge Officer decided whether he was a fit recipient, for relief or not and gave him a ticket.

Q.—Did that apply to persons selected from particular villages ?

A.—Only to villages within four miles.

Q.—Persons from villages beyond four miles were admitted without selection ?

A.—The ticket system applied to villages within four miles.

Q.—Was there any supervision with a view to checking any possible mistakes on the part of the officials you mentioned ?

A.—The Charge Officer and Circle Officers were constantly going round the villages and making inquiries. They saw those people who had been refused admission, and if occasion arose the latter were admitted and given tickets.

Q.—You had a check upon the action of those officers who had excluded the men ?

A.—They were the same officers, but they went round and corrected any mistakes that had been made. Those who had been excluded were brought under supervision in their villages, and if it was considered necessary afterwards to allow them to go on to works they were sent.

Q.—Were they given tickets or were they allowed to go on to works free ?

A.—They were not given tickets in the worst villages.

Q.—So that anybody was allowed to come on ?

A.—In some particularly bad villages, some of which lay within four miles, it would have been unjust to apply the distance test and so the system was not applied.

Q.—Your selection system practically applied to works which were afflicted with scarcity and not to those afflicted with famine?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Then that went on and your numbers increased. When the rains came did you introduce any change of policy ?

A.—Yes; the principle followed was that a certain number of the larger public works were to be closed as opportunity arose; kitchen relief was to be extended and admission to be absolutely free. In certain particular tracts the system of giving relief to workers for work done in the villages was introduced.

Q.—You closed public works ?

A.—A few works were kept open; three works out of five were kept open.

Q.—You never had many dependants on works ?

A.—No, never.

Q.—Why were dependants kept down on works ?

A.—They were told to go to kitchens. Kitchens were opened for them. Kitchens were in close proximity to works.

Q.—When you closed works were weakly gangs transferred to the dole or to kitchens ?

A.—Partly to kitchens and partly to the dole relief.

Q.—Had you at that time the system of kitchens and the distribution of village relief working side by side ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Through what agency was the distribution of doles made ?

A.—Through the Circle Officers.

Q.—Not the village *panchayat* ?

A.—The *panchayat* was present at the time of distribution.

Q.—Was the *panchayat* a useful agency for selecting fit persons for the dole ?

A.—It was not altogether useful. Sometimes it was useful. They were inclined to put on everybody they could, and if their views had been always accepted there would have been too great liberality.

Q.—When kept under check you found them of some use ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were kitchens opened for any time for all applicants for relief ?

A.—Our rains did not commence till the 3rd of July: in July, August and part of September kitchens remained absolutely open.

Q.—Then as regards the figures for gratuitous relief. In May there were 18,000, in June 34,000, in July 48,000; that was the flood level. There was a fall to 38,000 in August and to 19,000 in September. Were you surprised that village relief rose so high ?

A.—No, I was not surprised.

Q.—Do you think 48,000 was not excessive, having regard to the state of the people ?

A.—No.

Q.—You said the dole was being distributed ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were many able-bodied persons receiving the dole ?

A.—Very few in the Jubbulpore district.

Q.—Were any persons of the higher classes receiving the dole ?

A.—Very few.

Q.—On the whole, would you say of the kitchen relief that the administration of it did not have the effect of destroying the morale of the people ?

A.—No, it did not have that effect.

Q.—Of the 48,000 persons on gratuitous relief in July, how many were children ?

A.—26,600.

Q.—More than half ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You told me you had no test-works. Was your programme of works prepared before hand ?

A.—Yes; there was a programme ready.

Q.—Did it consist of works located on the spot ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Suppose a road was required between two villages, A and B. Had the land been marked out roughly and estimates prepared ?

A.—Yes; we took up old roads and improved them.

Q.—Did you take up any works that had not been previously located ?

A.—One work—it was one that had been recently suggested.

Q.—When you took up works did you follow the usual arrangement of charges ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And the charge was to consist of a certain number of men ?

A.—Yes; except in the Muwari *tahsil*.

Q.—Had you a regular establishment for each charge ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Appointed and ready before hand?

A.—Yes; with the exception of work agents.

Q.—What was the gross number of your charges?

A.—We had five charges.

Q.—Each adapted for how many workers?

A.—5,000.

Q.—And tools and plant on the spot?

A.—Yes; there was no difficulty about that.

Q.—You mentioned village works. Had you an arrangement whereby village works were located also and ready to take the place of large works if such should be considered desirable?

A.—Latterly, not at first.

Q.—You did not commence with a programme of large works and a subsidiary programme of village works?

A.—The subsidiary programme of village works was drawn up in September.

Q.—Did you find the subsidiary programme of village works a useful measure?

A.—It was very little adopted. The small works we took up were merely annexes.

Q.—You did not adopt the system of village works as a thing to fall back upon?

A.—We had them ready to fall back on, but did not do so.

Q.—Was there any cholera on public works?

A.—In one case there was a bad outbreak of cholera.

Q.—Did you think it desirable to split up the public works and send the people to village works?

A.—The work was split up as much as it could have been. We were digging 5 tanks and there was road work going on, so that the public works' charge had distributed itself.

Q.—On each portion how many people had you congregated?

A.—The maximum number would have been 5,000 on one work. On the work on which cholera broke out we had between 2,000 and 3,000.

Q.—You were not able to split up that number?

A.—They were spread out on tanks.

Q.—Before you split up big works did you take possession of the water-supply and purify it?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did that system of splitting up put an end to the cholera?

A.—Yes; in 12 days.

Q.—You would be inclined, on the appearance of cholera, to advocate the policy of splitting up large works, sending the people to the smaller works which had been arranged beforehand, and taking possession of the water-supply in the neighbourhood of these smaller works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What was the system of payment on your large works? Had you the code system or payment by results?

A.—The intermediate system of payment by results.

Q.—You did not fine at all, I understand? If work was short you paid accordingly?

A.—Yes.

Q.—It was not in the nature of a fine?

A.—No.

Q.—There was no minimum wage?

A.—No.

Q.—Did you find the wages earned were sufficient to keep your workers in good health?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was there a periodical medical examination of your workers?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And were they generally in good health?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was there any indication that the wage was more than enough to keep them in good health?

A.—When there was a family consisting of three or four the total wage was more than sufficient.

Q.—I see that the percentage of wages earned in your district was from 82 to 90 per cent. of the maximum. Now, if people were in good health on your works, and if they only earned on an average 90 per cent. of the full wage, was that wage, do you think, 10 per cent. more than it need have been?

A.—It would be very difficult to say if such an inference would be altogether justified. I think the wage was hardly more than sufficient for individual persons. It is quite sufficient, but not very much more than that, taking it all round.

Q.—Is it usual, to pay men coolies the same as women coolies?

A.—No, the women generally get less.

Q.—Were you in favour of equalizing the payment to women coolies and men coolies on relief works apart from the convenience of payment at one rate?

A.—I think the system adopted by which we took all women as carriers, and so paid them, solved the difficulty.

Q.—What was the proportion of men engaged to women?

A.—I should say, roughly, 2 to 3.

Q.—Two men to 3 women ?  
A.—I should say rather less than two men.  
Q.—Taking children between 10 and 14 and classing them as adult coolies, would you say one male digger to two women carriers ?  
A.—Generally.  
Q.—You say the adult males were all diggers ?  
A.—The generality were diggers.  
Q.—And you paid them the higher wage ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—And the women were carriers ?  
A.—Almost always.  
Q.—As carriers they received 15 *chhatáks* according to the scale of 1898 ?  
A.—They got 13 *chhatáks* in 1897.  
Q.—Was there any necessity to raise the scale from 13 to 15 in the light of your experience of both famines ? Was 13 *chhatáks* adequate in 1897 ?  
A.—No.  
Q.—Do you think that if the intermediate system had been introduced in 1897 sufficiently early on that scale, with kitchens for the children, that wages would have been sufficient ?  
A.—They would have been fairly adequate, provided the system had been introduced in good time.  
Q.—If the system had been introduced in good time, in September say, would the scale which prevailed in 1897 of 14 *chhatáks* for men and 13 for women, with provision for children, have been adequate ?  
A.—Yes ; generally adequate.  
Q.—If anything, it might be redundant ?  
A.—We adopted a much lower wage basis than the ordinarily prevailing price of grain. We kept our wage basis throughout at 14 seers.  
Q.—You had cut it down to the pre-Famine Commission rate ?  
A.—The men diggers got 5 pice and women 4, practically throughout the famine.  
Q.—Even less than the scale of 1897 ?  
A.—In some cases it was less.  
Q.—The conclusion was that the scale was redundant, and that in order to save the public purse you assumed a grain basis for conversion which was something between 12 and 14 seers, that is 15 per cent. below what was actually the ordinary rate ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—What was the average distance to which the people came to the works ?  
A.—Four to five miles.  
Q.—That would take from an hour to an hour and a half coming and going that distance ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—They didn't live on the works ?  
A.—They did during the fair season.  
Q.—Was that hour and a half coming and going, 3 hours, taken out of the working hours ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—And they could still perform the task ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—And then kept in good condition ?  
A.—Yes, the large majority in the fair season remained on the works.  
Q.—Had you complete control as regards administration ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Not as regards professional details ?  
A.—If I found anything not correct, I referred the matter.  
Q.—Had you the power of altering the scale of prices ?  
A.—I think I had under the circular. As a matter of fact we stuck to 14 seers throughout. The matter was settled in verbal discussion with the Commissioner.  
Q.—Was there any friction in dealing with the Public Works Officers ?  
A.—None whatever.  
Q.—Do you attribute that to the fact that in cases of dispute you had the ultimate word, subject to appeal ?  
A.—A good deal depends upon the officer.  
Q.—No doubt. Did you ever insist that such or such a policy should be carried out ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Did you make use of non-official agency for giving relief in villages ?  
A.—We used certain *mālguzárs* for the purpose of digging village tanks.  
Q.—Did they take advances ?  
A.—It was an advance, but not a loan.  
Q.—Government bore the whole cost ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—No part of the cost fell on the landholder ?  
A.—Not in this famine.  
Q.—In the rains you said people went back to gratuitous relief, and that gratuitous relief was not abused. Did you find that there were any complaints, on the part of the employers of labour, that your kitchens kept labourers from the fields ?  
A.—No, none.

Q.—Was the usual area of land sown with *khariif*?  
A.—The area has been slightly exceeded, with inferior crops.  
Q.—Was the change in the nature of less valuable seeds?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Do you think the change will be permanent?  
A.—No.  
Q.—When the *khariif* was ripening did you close your relief operations by whole villages at a time or did you eliminate individuals?  
A.—We began by elimination of individuals and ended by closing of villages.  
Q.—Did you make any *takavi* loans?  
A.—Not at the commencement of the famine.  
Q.—Was that the deliberate intention?  
A.—Yes, I think I should call it the deliberate intention. During the last famine the *mālguzārs* did not come forward very readily to take these loans, the consequence was that a little pressure had to be used occasionally to get them to take the loans, and the man who was most ready to yield to pressure was not always the best man to carry out the work with the loans, so I thought the loans were not successful. The district had suffered severely and *mālguzārs* were hard hit. I thought it better not to press the loans on the *mālguzārs*.  
Q.—Did you suspend revenue largely?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Were any precautions taken whereby the landlords had to pass it on?  
A.—Yes, very strict precautions.  
Q.—What is the revenue of your district?  
A.—Nine and a half lakhs.  
Q.—How much did you suspend?  
A.—Seven lakhs.  
Q.—The question of remission will come up now?  
A.—Yes, it has been partly considered, though not fully.  
Q.—What is the incidence of revenue per acre on cultivated land?  
A.—It is very difficult to give it.  
Q.—What is the arithmetical incidence per acre?  
A.—I could not say.  
Q.—What is the cultivated area?  
A.—Under a million acres.  
Q.—And your revenue is 9 lakhs?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Therefore your incidence per acre will be something under Rs. 1, about Re. 0-11-0?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—What proportion of that cultivated area is sown with food crops and what with non-food crops?  
A.—I could not answer the question. The greater portion is sown with food crops.  
Q.—What does wheat cover?  
A.—The chief *rabi* harvest is wheat.  
Q.—Take an average year: what proportion does wheat cover?  
A.—It is mostly sown mixed. Wheat by itself covers only under 80,000 acres.  
Q.—What is your yield per acre?  
A.—Eight maunds.  
Q.—That 8 maunds will fetch Rs. 2-4-0 per maund?  
A.—About Rs. 2-8-0.  
Q.—That would be Rs. 20 per acre?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Is there a double crop?  
A.—No, not to any great extent.  
Q.—Then there are bye-products, straw, chaff, &c., which will probably give you Rs. 5 more?  
A.—Not so much.  
Q.—Would it be Rs. 3?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Then the gross produce of an acre will be Rs. 23?  
A.—Yes, of fairly good land.  
Q.—Average land would be Rs. 20?  
A.—Less.  
Q.—Take it at the lowest. Put it at Rs. 15. Your revenue is 14 annas so that the Government takes less than one-fifteenth of the gross produce?  
A.—Yes; I am speaking of course without the book.  
Q.—That is to say Government takes less than 6 per cent. of the gross produce?  
A.—Probably.  
Q.—That does not take into account the income from cattle and other sources of industry. Nevertheless your district is in a depressed condition?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—That you attribute to the bad seasons, do you?  
A.—To the very bad seasons of seven years.

Q.—Do you think at the present time that the settlement is a little severe?

A.—Yes, in some parts of the district.

Q.—Would you advocate a temporary or permanent reduction?

A.—A reduction for the remaining five years of the settlement has been recommended.

Q.—Do you think if the years are good and seasons good that the effect of that measure will be to rehabilitate the district?

A.—Yes, I think so.

Mr. Nicholson.—Had you any special relief for artisans?

A.—No, none.

Q.—Was there any difficulty in the matter of supplying fodder for your cattle?

A.—None.

Q.—To what do you attribute that?

A.—I attribute that in part to the fact that Government forests are available, and that the rainfall, though not enough for grain, was sufficient as regards grass.

Q.—There was no question of importation of fodder?

A.—No.

Q.—Was there any mortality of cattle?

A.—The cattle suffered, especially in June, from the prolonged hot weather and consequent scarcity of fodder and water just before the rains.

Q.—Presumably they were the older cattle?

A.—Yes, useless cattle.

Q.—Did the reduction in the way of cattle have any effect upon the condition of the country?

A.—No.

Q.—Did you pay any special attention to the preparation of statistics regarding the mortality of cattle?

A.—No.

Q.—There was no special need for it?

A.—No.

Q.—Was there any large exportation from your district?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Where to?

A.—To the Bombay Presidency especially of wheat and gram.

Q.—That was the surplus of the previous year and the dealers and people were sufficiently confident that they could spare a certain amount?

A.—Yes, and prices were very high; gram was  $9\frac{1}{2}$  seers to the rupee and that induced a lively export about November 1899.

Q.—Did that continue?

A.—It went on during the winter; the food stocks were sufficient to enable this export to be made.

Q.—It went on probably in a decreasing extent throughout the famine?

A.—Yes; that is, of these two kinds of grain wheat and gram.

Q.—Did you export fodder?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How was it arranged?

A.—Through the Forest Department.

Q.—Are there any statistics available?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Can you tell me what became of the stocks of fodder that remained on hand?

A.—At the end of the hot weather I had it distributed for a nominal sum to the cultivators. A certain amount still remains on hand.

Q.—You were ready to export more than was actually exported?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And what was the failure to export due to?

A.—To difficulty in pressing the bales.

Q.—Was there any difficulty about railway transport?

A.—No, the railways companies took everything, but the presses worked badly.

Q.—The railway carried away as much fodder as the presses turned out?

A.—Yes; there was slight delay sometimes; it lasted only a couple of days.

Q.—Would you say the stock of grass would go into 12,000 or 15,000 tons?

A.—I cannot not say.

Q.—I believe there was a considerable amount of private charity in Jubbulpore?

A.—I should say not very much.

Q.—Was there any organized private charity?

A.—No, the people had had too many bad years to organize private charity.

Q.—Did *mālguzārs* employ on work, which was not actually productive, any number of labourers?

A.—Yes, they carried out works at my instigation for the benefit of the cultivators and people of their villages, which were more or less unproductive.

Q.—Throughout the famine period?

A.—I asked them not to begin till the worst time.

Q.—Why was that ?

A.—Because there was sufficient work at first going on in the way of cutting the *rabi* crops and in one way or another. I wanted to reserve these works until the hot weather when distress was at its height.

Q.—That had an appreciable effect in the district, had it ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was any part of the charitable relief funds placed at the disposal of the Committee in Jubbulpore ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And how was it spent ?

A.—Chiefly in the purchase of seed.

Q.—Can you say how much ?

A.—About Rs. 1,30,000.

Mr. Bourdillon.—At first you seem to have had very little mortality above the mean : your figure was 4 for August 1900, in September it was over 4, and in October it went to nearly 5. Are these bad months in the district always ?

A.—Yes. The mortality was especially high in the town of Jubbulpore.

Q.—Was that on account of fever or cholera ?

A.—I chiefly attribute the sickness to the fact that in September we had continued wet weather for three weeks, and that affected the health of the people ; fevers were most prevalent.

Q.—Was the mortality not confined to any particular class ?

A.—No : the town population suffered more than the people in the district generally.

Q.—Then, as regards the employment of labour when the village works were closed, is it a fact that there was very little field work this year ?

A.—There was weeding.

Q.—When did it begin ?

A.—In August.

Q.—Something had to be done from June to August ?

A.—We closed village works in the middle of June : large works we did not close till July.

Q.—That sent some of the people on to kitchens ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In July you had 35,000, in August 30,000. What was the reason of that drop in August in kitchen relief ?

A.—Probably because the people got a little weeding and other employment in the fields in August.

Q.—And then you tightened up the relief ?

A.—Not until the end of August.

Q.—Then this was automatic ?

A.—Yes, to some extent.

Q.—Were there any complaints against kitchens and gratuitous relief by *malguzárs*, that they could not get labourers for field works ?

A.—No. In our kitchens the number of grown-up people was extremely small and they were generally infirm and cripples.

Q.—Was the district badly hit ?

A.—In 1897 it was worse than in 1899.

Q.—Did it bring about a tendency on the part of the people to go to kitchens ?

A.—Not in this district. At no period had we more than 5,000 adults in our kitchens.

Q.—There was no difficulty, was there, in the management of arboriginal tribes ?

A.—No special steps were necessary.

Mr. Nicholson.—Your difficulty was not in any way complicated by the question of immigrants, was it ?

A.—We had no trouble. There were not more than two or three lots—nothing at all.



Answers by B. ROBERTSON, Esq., I. C. S., C. I. E., Deputy Commissioner,  
Jubbulpore, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

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The answers to the questions under the head "Introductory" are already available to a great extent in the final Famine Report for the district.

Q. 6.—The necessity of relief was chiefly assumed from the fact of the widespread failure of crops.

Q. 7.—The district passed through a severe famine in 1896-97. It had thereafter two fair harvests, although the rabi of 1898-99 was distinctly poor. But the people were not sufficiently recovered to stand against another failure of crops, and when the rice crop of 1899 was completely lost, and kodon and juar practically so, there could be no question as to the necessity of giving relief.

Q. 8.—Village relief was given in a few specially bad tracts in October, after I had personally visited the affected villages and seen for myself the condition of the people. Kitchens were also opened in the same month, also in the worst affected places. In November relief works under the Public Works Department were opened, strictly on the intermediate system.

Q. 9.—Programmes of relief works were generally ready by the time the necessity for opening works arose.

Q. 10.—Large public works were adopted for the two southern tahsils of the district, and small village works for the Murwara tahsil. Lists of suitable works in the latter tahsil were prepared when the necessity for giving relief became apparent.

Q. 11.—The general sequence of relief measures is indicated above. We had no poor-house in this district. Government forests were thrown open as soon as distress was foreseen, and the early carrying out of this measure proved very useful in the hilly portions of the district.

Q. 12.—The Land Revenue staff was the agency employed for distributing village relief, and for generally observing the condition of the people. The number of Revenue Inspectors was doubled in the middle of October, and the arrangements for village relief were speedily completed by this agency.

Q. 13.—Loans were not given out in the present famine.

Q. 14.—Wells are not used for irrigation in this district.

Q. 15.—Regular relief works under the Public Works Department were first undertaken in the tracts most affected.

Q. 16.—The intermediate system was introduced from the commencement, no distinction being made on account of previous occupation, and the ordinary classification of labourers prescribed by the Public Works Department Code being observed.

Q. 17.—Payment was strictly in accordance with results. There was a rest-day allowance, and weakly gangs paid on the task-work system were formed. The Public Works Department Code working was thus introduced from the outset.

I shall note only on a few questions under the head "Large Public Works."

Q. 23.—Admission was at first free to all persons ready to submit to the labour test. There was no distance test, and residence on the works was not compulsory. Afterwards in February or March a system of admission by tickets was introduced, in the case of all persons belonging to villages within a radius of 4 miles from a work. The system worked generally satisfactorily and no difficulty was experienced in carrying it out.

Q. 31.—The Code task system was not resorted to. Payment by results was maintained throughout.

Q. 32.—In my opinion, if started in time, relief can be adequately afforded in cases of severe famine by works conducted throughout on a system of payments by results.

Q. 34.—In my opinion the scale of wages latterly adopted was adequate without being unduly liberal. Care was taken in fixing the grain rate to guard against over-payment. Almost throughout, the grain rate was fixed at 14 seers, which gave a wage of 5 pice to a digger, 4 pice to a carrier, and 2 pice to a working child. This kept the workers in good condition. Savings were possible, I think, when family earnings were clubbed together, but to a limited extent. We found no difficulty as a rule in getting back copper coin from Banias on or near the works. In some places rupees could be exchanged for copper at a premium.

The reason for my saying that the wage paid was sufficient is the good physical condition of the workers, which was maintained throughout. I do not think the wage we gave can possibly be called over-liberal. It attracted people to the works in the slack season, before the introduction of the ticket system, who were not really in need of relief. But when there is nothing to do, people of the lower classes can always be found ready to come on works, although not in need of relief, in order to earn a wage, which might be insufficient for the support of the really famine-stricken. From the fact that such people came on the works, it cannot be said that the wage was unnecessarily high.

Q. 35.—A rest-day wage was given, and I think this method is unobjectionable.

Q. 38.—Payment was made daily.

Q. 40.—And to the head of the gang. Under the system in force, whereby gangs were made up, as far as possible, of individuals from the same village, this system of payment was suitable.

Q. 52.—The whole of one tahsil was relieved by small village works. Latterly a few small works were also opened in remote places in the other two tahsils.

Q. 53.—Chiefly tank or bund works, and a few petty road works.

Q. 54.—The works were conducted mainly by direct management under the supervision of the Civil agency. Only a few works were carried out through malguzars.

Q. 55.—The malguzars managed the works almost identically on the lines laid down for direct management, which have been described in the District Famine Report, and their works were supervised by the Charge Officers similarly to directly managed works.

Q. 56.—The system of payment by results was adopted throughout. At first the workers were paid 1 pice below the Public Works Department scale. But when selection of applicants for relief had been got into thorough order, the deduction of 1 pice was dropped, as care was being taken that only persons really in need of relief were admitted to the works.

Q. 57.—Admission was by ticket, and the plan worked in my opinion successfully.

Q. 58.—As already explained, the two kinds of works were kept distinct and neither drew labourers from the other.

Q. 59.—I am of opinion that with good supervision and with selection of applicants for relief, it is desirable to extend village works. I have given grounds for this opinion in the District Report, *viz.*, simplicity of management and economy and efficiency in the granting of relief.

Q. 69.—At first village gratuitous relief was employed, but as kitchens were gradually opened, the latter form of relief predominated. I favour kitchens as they are cheap, and one can be fairly certain that the people get actually fed.

Q. 75.—There was a fixed ration scale. One meal a day was given, which had to be eaten on the premises.

Q. 77.—Admission to kitchens was subject only to certain conditions as to relieving able-bodied adults and children of people who were well-to-do.

Q. 78.—Brahmin cooks were employed more or less. General reluctance to take cooked food was manifested by grown-up people. This was not confined to any particular classes, almost all were equally averse to feeding at a kitchen. The reluctance disappeared towards the close of the famine in one or two tracts, but remained in most parts of the district.

Q. 87.—The number of persons in receipt of relief in this district did not exceed 15 per cent. of the population affected.

Q. 88.—And I do not consider that relief was for any length of time either excessive or defective. Any tendency towards the former alternative was checked by the introduction of the ticket system for admission to works. And the reluctance of adults to take cooked food at kitchens prevented the latter form of relief being abused. That relief was not defective was shown by the generally good physical condition of the people, and by the moderate death-rate which prevailed.

CAMP,  
The 4th January 1901. }

B. ROBERTSON,  
*Deputy Commissioner,*  
*Fubbulpore.*



MR. A. S. WOMACK, I.C.S., DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF HOSHANGABAD.

*The President.*—How long have you been the Deputy Commissioner of Hoshangabad ?

A.—Since May 1898.

Q.—You had no experience of the previous famine of 1897 ?

A.—None at all.

Q.—Did you begin your famine policy before November ?

A.—The organization began in September, that is to say the district was divided into circles and charges and relief was actually started in that month.

Q.—Did your district suffer severely in 1897 ?

A.—I believe it did.

Q.—In 1896 were the crops good or average ?

A.—They were below average ; they were poor; both crops were poor.

Q.—What was the state of the *rabt* crop of 1899 ?

A.—It was poor to bad.

Q.—Did you begin your relief operations with charitable relief or with works ?

A.—There was a short period of kitchen relief ; we had charitable relief about three weeks before the works were started.

Q.—Did you set on foot any test-works ?

A.—None.

Q.—You commenced with regular public works ?

A.—Yes, in the last week of October.

Q.—In your works had you any other system except the intermediate system ?

A.—Never.

Q.—Do you think that in the Hoshangabad district the percentage of wages earned by the labourers was 81 to 90 per cent. of the full wage ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think that the people seemed to be in good condition always ?

A.—The local people were in good condition.

Q.—If they were in good condition and if they earned only 81 to 90 per cent. of the full wage, am I justified in drawing the inference that the full wage was redundant and more than it should have been ?

A.—I think that it would be very easy to press the inference too far. At the same time I may be allowed to say that I have some doubt about the accuracy of the figures which go to show that the wages earned were only 81 to 90 per cent. of the full wage.

Q.—Do you think that the wages erred more on the side of leniency than on the side of strictness ?

A.—It would be correct to say that the wages erred more on "the side of leniency than on the side of strictness."

Q.—Can you explain the fact that the number of your dependants was considerably more in proportion to the number of workers than in Jubbulpore ?

A.—We did not resort so largely to village relief in the first few months of the famine.

Q.—You trusted to the dependants going to works ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you find any reason to alter your policy on that point ?

A.—Yes, about March.

Q.—You seem to prefer the system of village dole to kitchens ?

A.—It was only at the beginning that we forced the dependants to go back to the kitchens.

Q.—Why ?

A.—Mainly because of the immigrants.

Q.—If you had not been troubled by immigrants, you would have preferred grain dole to kitchens ?

A.—I should still have extended the kitchens, for as the distress became more severe, it was necessary to have kitchens for the children of the district apart from the question of immigrants.

Q.—Had you any reason to believe that the mothers to whom you gave the dole did not sufficiently feed their children ?

A.—There was that danger.

Q.—You had two systems in operation ; they were neutralized to some extent by the immigration question ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Which did you find easier to work, doles or kitchens as far as your administration went ?

A.—I find that it is much easier to work the kitchens when people become accustomed to them.

Q.—Did you find any inclination to defraud Government on that part of the people living on the dole system ?

A.—Only a few insignificant cases.

Q.—In such matters your experience was that the village *panchayet* did not intercept the dole?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In your systems of work did you have control over the regulation of the wage basis. Did you fix the prices upon the basis of which wages were calculated?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Had you occasion to alter the scale often?

A.—Not very often.

Q.—How did people get their grain? Was grain provided for them on the works or were they allowed to make their own arrangements in the villages?

A.—There were ordinary grain shops on the works.

Q.—Did you find that the prices in the grain shops on the works were the same as in the villages?

A.—They were practically the same.

Q.—Did you regulate the prices?

A.—I made no attempt to interfere in that way.

Q.—Did you exercise control over the quality of grain offered for sale on your works?

A.—It was examined periodically by officers in charge as well as by myself when I went round.

Q.—Had you any instances in which bad grain was offered for sale?

A.—None that I recollect.

Q.—Did you allow anybody who asked for work to come on to the relief works?

A.—Yes, everywhere except in the camp near Hoshangabad, which was recruited by drafts from the neighbouring tracts, who were admitted on the ticket system. The only use of the ticket system was to exclude immigrants from Bhopal.

Q.—You had no ticket system with the object of excluding British subjects?

A.—No.

Q.—You did not try to exclude people from the villages adjacent to the works?

A.—No.

Q.—You considered the condition of the people was so bad that no exclusion should be practised, or was it because you considered it was not necessary?

A.—I considered that the condition of the people prohibited exclusion.

Q.—Do you think there were people on works who ought not to be there?

A.—Not a large percentage.

Q.—Had you any poor houses?

A.—No.

Q.—Did you see anything to lead you to believe that poorhouses would have been useful?

A.—A poorhouse at Harda would have been, I think, a better institution than a kitchen for a short time, looking at the numbers of immigrants, but the period was so short that I did not think it necessary to establish it.

Q.—Did you give any *takāvi* advances?

A.—None during the famine.

Q.—Do you think that well irrigation should be stimulated by *takāvi* grants?

A.—I do not see any reason why irrigation should not be widely extended if people could be induced to sink wells?

Q.—Is the water level far below the surface?

A.—In ordinary years it is about 20 feet.

Q.—Is there no irrigation with water only twenty feet below the surface?

A.—Very little indeed: people are so accustomed to rely on the peculiar properties of the black cotton soil that they do not think it worth their while to dig wells. Irrigation is again unpopular because there is an idea that irrigation without manure impoverishes the soil.

Q.—Did you suspend revenue largely?

A.—About 4 lakhs out of 7½.

Q.—What is the staple crop of your district?

A.—Wheat.

Q.—What proportion of the cultivated area does wheat cover?

A.—At the present time much less than ⅓, but in normal years, I should say, ½.

Q.—What other crops are produced?

A.—Gram is very largely sown too.

Q.—Is there a practice of double crops prevailing?

A.—Very slightly.

Q.—What would be the outturn of the average yield of land in your district?

A.—Six hundred and twenty lbs. is generally expected.

Q.—What would be the value of that at harvest price?

A.—Very nearly Rs. 20.

Q.—Is there any system along the railway of depôts established by grain merchants for buying grain at all times of the year? Have the firms of Ralli Brothers and other merchants established their depôts at particular railway stations for the purchase of grain all the year round?

A.—Ralli Brothers have not drawn from my district to a very great extent in recent years.

Q.—Can you assign any reason for that? Had it anything to do with the seasons?

A.—I think so. The district had nothing to export.

Q.—In ordinary years the average yield of land is Rs. 20. I suppose something might be added for straw?

A.—You might add Rs. 3.

Q.—Then can we take Rs. 23 as the value. Now what is the incidence of your revenue per acre?

A.—Very nearly Re. 1.

Q.—What rent does the *mālguzār* take on an average?

A.—Rupees 2 to Rs. 2-4-0.

Q.—Then the Government revenue would be 5 per cent. of the gross produce?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is your district at present in a depressed condition?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Owing to transitory (e. g. bad seasons) or permanent causes?

A.—Bad seasons no doubt are the main cause.

Q.—Taking an average fair year, do you think the revenue is too high?

A.—Given a succession of fair average years, the revenue is not too high.

Q.—Did you use non-official agency in your relief operations to any extent?

A.—Village works were conducted through the agency of the *mālguzārs* but they were not given entire and sole responsibility in conducting them.

Q.—Had you a programme of village works to fall back upon in substitution for large works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was it used?

A.—To a very great extent.

Q.—Was it used constantly or at particular times of the year?

A.—I resorted to it at the end of March in the Harda tahsil in order to relieve pressure on the Public Works Department.

Q.—Do you think more could be done in that way?

A.—I think so.

Q.—Are these village works of great utility?

A.—A great deal can be done in the way of village works in the Hoshangabad district.

Q.—You mean village tanks and wells?

A.—There is also a very large area of the district growing *kans* grass which can be eradicated by the construction of embankments.

Q.—Do you think that the *mālguzārs* of your district have got no capital to enable them to eradicate the grass?

A.—I think so.

Q.—What would you think of a system of organization amongst the villagers themselves to enable them to get money on easier terms, e.g. a system of Agricultural Banks? Do you think there is a spirit of combination existing in your district which can be fostered?

A.—I should like an attempt to be made. I think it might lead to useful results.

Q.—Do you think it would receive support or opposition from the *mālguzārs*?

A.—I think it would receive their support.

Q.—At all events you think it is worth while making an attempt?

A.—I should like to see an attempt made.

Q.—Do you think it would be necessary in starting such a scheme for Government to make advances on any large scale?

A.—I think perhaps it would; at all events in the beginning.

Mr. Nicholson.—Were there in your district any special forms of relief for artisans or weavers?

A.—No.

Q.—Was the rainfall sufficient to secure a large amount of fodder or grass?

A.—Yes. There was no scarcity of fodder or of grass.

Q.—Was your district an exporting district?

A.—We exported considerably to Bombay.

Q.—Fodder or grass?

A.—Both were exported considerably.

Q.—Did people dispose of their private stocks of fodder at high prices and despatch them to districts outside their own?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Can you give me any idea of the quantity which was so despatched?

A.—I am afraid I have no figures.

Q.—Did you observe at the railway stations large stocks of fodder which they were unable to despatch with sufficient speed?

A.—I think there was no cause for complaint on that score except perhaps in the matter of forest grass. There was some complaint about Government forest grass. The forest officers made several complaints about the scarcity of waggons.

Q.—Had freight anything to do with it?

A.—I think that the question of freight did not enter at all in the despatch of fodder, it was to be paid for by the Bombay Government.

Q.—The railway did not provide waggons for carrying away the fodder?

A.—No.

Q.—Were representations made to them on that score?

A.—The matter was entirely in the hands of the Forest Officers.

Q.—At the beginning of the rains were there stacks in large quantities available for transport?

A.—I think that all the fodder was disposed of: but there were stacks of grass available.

Q.—To any large amount?

A.—Yes, to a very considerable amount.

Q.—Has it been since disposed of?

A.—A good deal is lying still in the depôts.

Q.—It was given to the people?

A.—It was offered.

Q.—Offered at a price?

A.—First of all at a price; and then it was offered free.

Q.—Can you tell me whether grass cutting was used as a relief operation?

A.—It was.

Q.—When did you begin it?

A.—From the very beginning.

Q.—How long did that relief last?

A.—Right up to the end of February.

Q.—What amount was spent on it?

A.—I am afraid I cannot give you the figures.

Q.—Was it a very important item of relief operations?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What did it cost to put a ton of grass on the railway?

A.—Famine operations did not cover putting grass on the railway. It included the cutting of grass and storing it in depôts at some distance from the railway station. The cost of that operation would, roughly speaking, be about Rs. 7 per ton.

Q.—Were you an import or export district in the matter of grain?

A.—For a very short period we exported a little wheat from Harda.

Q.—Did the exports appreciably raise prices in the district?

A.—Prices went up with a bound.

Q.—Did you import a large quantity of grain?

A.—A very large quantity.

Q.—Had that any effect on the prices materially?

A.—It steadied them.

Q.—Can you tell me how much was imported in your district or what proportion of the population could have been maintained on imported grain?

A.—I am afraid I have no figures available.

Q.—From what State did the immigrants chiefly come?

A.—Immigrants came from Marwar even before famine was declared, but they were in good condition. Many who were not in good condition came in from Indore. They came about March—early in March, in large numbers.

Q.—Did they continue to arrive throughout the famine?

A.—Certainly, right up to the end of the cold weather.

Q.—Did they wander about or did they go to work?

A.—The bulk of the people went to work. There was work within six miles of the borders.

Q.—Were they in a sufficiently good condition to go on the work?

A.—They were in a condition to work, but not in good condition. They were not always in a condition to go direct to the works without going through the poorhouse or kitchen; some of them were in the most destitute condition.

Q.—I find from your answers that there were something like 7,000 immigrants on works?

A.—I think there were certainly more than 7,000 immigrants.

Q.—Why do you suppose there were more than 7,000 immigrants, more than were actually recorded?

A.—Because many persons concealed the fact that they came from Indore.

Q.—What was the reason?

A.—They were liable to be sent back; and as a matter of fact we did send some back; we sent back batches to Indore.

Q.—How many were thus transported or deported?

A.—I remember on one occasion alone we sent over 2,000 people.

Q.—They were collected from works in your district generally?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Had the police any orders to collect such persons and send them to Indore?

A.—They had orders to bring in all persons who were wandering.

Q.—Irrespective of their being immigrants? Or only immigrants?

A.—They were specially cautioned in the Harda taluk to be on the look-out for immigrants from Indore.



Q.—They did as a matter of fact bring them?  
A.—Yes.

Q.—Were these wandering gangs in an emaciated condition?  
A.—They were not in gangs: but wandering individually; generally speaking they were in a destitute condition.

Q.—Did these immigrants have any effect on the mortality returns?  
A.—Yes, certainly.

Q.—Have you got any statistics?  
A.—I remember in one month, either February or March, when the proportion of immigrants to local people on works was one in five, the mortality among the immigrants was about 50 per cent. of the total mortality.

Q.—Do you think that the greater mortality was due to the large immigration of persons in an emaciated condition from other parts?  
A.—I do not think that the number of immigrants was sufficiently large to materially affect the percentage.

*The President.*—If you had established poorhouses besides kitchens, would not these immigrants have been kept under control?  
A.—Practically speaking the Harda kitchen had become a poorhouse because I did not allow people to leave the kitchen until they were fit for work.

Q.—Was there accommodation provided?  
A.—Yes, hutting accommodation: a medical officer was put in charge.

Q.—Were there sanitary appliances?  
A.—Yes.

Q.—How many institutions were turned into poorhouses?  
A.—Two.

Q.—Were these two kitchens able to take a material percentage of the immigrants and keep them under control and observation?  
A.—I think they met the situation completely.

Q.—Can you tell me how many immigrants went into poorhouses? The maximum at any one time?  
A.—I think the figures went up to 600 at Harda at one time.

Q.—Were any representations made on the subject?  
A.—Yes, from time to time.

Q.—To whom?  
A.—To their States.

Q.—From what time was there sensible relief on that head in your district?  
A.—We despatched a batch of 2,000 in the middle of April, but many of them came back. Then representations were again made to the authorities and the Political Agent personally made arrangements for their relief in Indore.

Q.—So the fact that on the 2nd of August there were only 2,247 on works was the result of their getting relief in the Native States?  
A.—Yes.

Q.—Then there was an appreciable portion on gratuitous relief?  
A.—Yes.

Q.—Were they all deported?  
A.—Most of them were deported.

*Mr. Bourdillon.*—Your mortality figures went on steadily up to the end of June, but in July there was a sudden rise. Had you any epidemic or is there any special reason for that rise?  
A.—There was an epidemic of cholera; I think it commenced in July in a severe form.

Q.—You had closed your works in October?  
A.—By July two of my works were closed.

Q.—What was the mortality in October and November?  
A.—In October it was exactly the same as in September; I do not recollect what the figure was in November.

Q.—You always have a rise in the autumn?  
A.—Yes.

Q.—Apart from epidemics the climatic condition affects mortality?  
A.—Yes.

Q.—Your kitchens and poorhouses show a very sudden rise in July and a very sudden fall in August. What was the reason of this?  
A.—The sudden rise was due to the change of policy.

Q.—Do you mean the introduction of dependants from time to time?  
A.—Yes.

Q.—And what about the sudden fall in August?  
A.—The fall began spontaneously.

Q.—Did you have many complaints that the *mālguzārs* were unable to find workers?  
A.—Very few.

Q.—Did you make able-bodied persons, who were fed in the kitchens, work?  
A.—Yes.

Q.—Were you prepared for the sudden rise in the numbers resorting to the kitchens?  
A.—I cannot say that I was altogether surprised to have this sudden rise.

Q.—Were there any people of the respectable classes among those who came for kitchen relief?

A.—I think there were very few except the labouring classes.

Q.—Was there in your district a panic while the rains held off?

A.—There was certainly a feeling of great distress in the minds of the people.

Q.—That had some influence in making them resort to the kitchen relief?

A.—No doubt.

Q. 1.—The district had deteriorated in a very marked manner since the introduction of the current settlement, and the agricultural classes were much impoverished. The district had made a very poor recovery from the famine of 1896-97. The kharif of 1897 was a good one, but the rabi of 1897-98, and both harvests of 1898-99, were poor or bad.

Q. 2.—The kharif sowings were above the average of the years preceding the settlement. But the substitution of kharif for rabi crops is one of the signs of deterioration in this district. The area under kharif in 1899 was 340,000 acres in round figures. The average area in 1893-94, 1894-95 and 1895-96 was about 290,000 acres.

Q. 3.—(a) 48·26 inches.

(b) 21·98 inches = 45 per cent.

(c) 16th September 1899.

(d) The rainfall was scanty and intermittent, with long breaks of bright weather with intense heat.

Q. 4.—Exact figures are not immediately available, but as near as I can calculate the percentage was about 41.

Q. 5.—Field labourers are 6 per cent. of the total population; general labourers 21 per cent. I cannot give the percentage of petty cultivators, but I estimate it at about 5 per cent.

Q. 6.—Relief to able-bodied persons was given in the form of kitchen relief pending the opening of works. The acceptance of cooked food was the test of the necessity of relief.

Q. 7.—The following facts led me to think that the machinery of relief should be set in motion :—

(i) The absence of all demand for agricultural labour;

(ii) Physical deterioration, and in some cases actual emaciation, especially among children;

(iii) A rapid rise in the prices of food-grains to famine pitch;

(iv) A tendency among the lower classes to wander and congregate in the larger towns and villages.

Q. 8.—Kitchens were first started: but public works were opened in October, and kitchen relief was then restricted to the infirm.

Q. 10.—Large public works were to be the backbone of the relief system. A programme of village works was prepared at an early stage, about December 1899.

Q. 11.—The first step taken was to throw open the Government forests. Village kitchens were opened in September 1899 and public works kitchens in October. Private charity was not organized until January 1900. Poor-houses were not established; nor were test works opened as ordinarily understood.

Q. 12.—The district was divided into famine charges and circles in September 1899.

Q. 13.—Small loans, for the improvement of the water-supply in villages, were advanced, but not at an early stage. No loans were issued at the outset.

Q. 19.—An effort was made to open some village works in the Harda tahsil before the public works: but only two or three were thus opened. It is, therefore, correct to say generally that public works were first opened.

Q. 20.—A month's clear notice had to be given before the first public works were opened. Otherwise they were opened without delay.

Q. 21.—There was severe pressure on the public works in the Harda tahsil in March 1900. It was relieved by drafts to village works.

Q. 23.—Admission was free, except in the case of the Nerbudda bridge work, which was recruited by ticket and by drafts from the Pathrota work. No distance test was enforced. Residence on the works was not compulsory except at the Nerbudda bridge work.

Q. 31.—Payment was made according to work done, there being no minimum wage.

Q. 32.—My experience leads me to the conclusion that if distress is taken in time, relief can be adequately afforded by works conducted throughout on a system of payment by results.

Q. 38.—Payments were made daily.

Q. 42.—Payments were made by results, on the "intermediate" system, but to the mates of gangs for gangs as a whole. Nominal rolls of workers were, therefore, not necessary. Non-working dependants were fed at the work kitchens.

Q. 46.—The prices scale for the calculation of wages was fixed from time to time by the Deputy Commissioner and was based on a mixture of gram and teora. Small variations in prices were neglected.

Q. 51.—Drafts were made from public works to village works in the Harda tahsil to relieve the pressure on the former. The drafts were made successfully. It is believed that none of the persons thus drafted returned to the public works.

Q. 52.—The village works were not generally speaking the backbone of the relief system. But in some parts of the district—*e. g.*, the Babai and Bankheri Revenue Circles—they practically took the place of a public work which would otherwise have been necessary, and in Harda they were invaluable, as the public works programme was in some danger of being exhausted—or would have been, but for the railway work—and they facilitated the process of getting the people back to their homes before the rains.

Q. 53.—The work consisted chiefly of (a) the repair of existing tanks, (b) the construction of the field embankments.

Q. 54.—They were conducted under the supervision of the Civil authorities with the assistance of an Overseer of the Public Works Department through malguzars.

Q. 55.—The work of each gang was marked out and measured up daily; and payments were made daily by the malguzar. The malguzar was given an advance to enable him to make payments for a week or more.

Q. 56.—The intermediate system was in force. The scale of wages was as follows:—

Grain equivalent in chattaks.		ADULTS (OVER 14).			Working children (8—14).
		Men.	Women.	Rest-day.	
		16	14	12	8
		Pice.	Pice.	Pice.	Pice.
Price of grain in seers per rupee (fixed by Deputy Commissioner.)	8	8	7	6	4
	8½	8	7	6	4
	9	7	6	5	4
	9½	7	6	5	3
	10	6	6	5	3
	10½	6	5	5	3
	11	6	5	4	3
	11½	6	5	4	3
	12	5	5	4	3
	12½	5	4	4	3
	13	5	4	4	2
	13½	5	4	4	2
	14	4	4	3	2

Admission was restricted to labourers and petty cultivators. Where distress was slight the rest-day's wage was disallowed.

Q. 58.—Large public and small village works were not in existence close to one another so as to clash.

Q. 59.—My experience leads me to the conclusion that village works are of the greatest possible value as supplementary to large public works, and that under proper supervision they can be made the backbone of the relief system. The strongest objection—that they are too popular—can be met by a system of selection. On the other hand the malguzars take an interest in the due performance of the work. The cost of tools and establishment is reduced to a minimum. The risk of epidemic disease is comparatively small, and the consequences are less serious. And the people are kept in their homes ready to return to their ordinary occupation at the first opportunity.

Q. 60.—The aboriginal tribes of this district are the Gonds, Korkus and Mowasis. Kitchens were opened for these also, but were not resorted to. They took kindly to the grass-cutting and road works provided for them in the forests, which were entirely successful in preventing mortality from starvation. I am satisfied that the people would not have resorted to the large public works if work had not been found for them near their homes.

Q. 61.—The works were under the control of the officers of the Forest Department.

Q. 68.—Dependants on large public works were given cooked food; those on village works, if relieved at all, were relieved in the same way.

Q. 69.—At first—that is, as soon as works were provided for the able-bodied and kitchens were restricted to the infirm—I favoured the cash dole system of village relief in preference to kitchens on the ground of economy. But in March and April, I was obliged to extend the kitchen system owing to the increasing severity of distress and the large influx of destitute immigrants from Indore. Later there was a further extension of kitchen relief in accordance with the orders of the Chief Commissioner in connection with the monsoon programme.

Q. 74.—There were—

76 kitchens open on the 5th May 1900.

95 „ „ 19th „ „

228 „ „ 4th August 1900.

A kitchen was expected to serve a radius of about three miles in the hot weather and about 2 miles in the rains.

Q. 75.—People were compelled to feed on the premises.

Q. 76.—There was no limit.

Q. 77.—Originally there was no restriction. When works were opened kitchens were restricted to the destitute infirm until the monsoon, when they were again made free.

Q. 78.—Brahman cooks were employed for all castes except aboriginals, who were allowed their own cooks. The greatest reluctance to accept cooked food was shown by Kurmis, Kirs and the aboriginals. The reluctance was overcome by degrees, but in some cases continued until the rains were well established.

Q. 82.—No remission of land revenue was made during the year. Out of a total demand of Rs. 7,62,548, Rs. 4,38,832 have been suspended.

Q. 83.—The suspensions were based on crop outturns and areas as compared with the settlement figures, and not on the general capacity of individual malguzars.

Q. 85.—No suspensions or remissions were made in the case of the Chhater and Bariam Jagirs. The distribution of rental suspensions was left to the malguzars.

Q. 87.—The number of persons on relief towards the end of the hot weather was as follows:—

19th May	...	...	...	77,777
26th "	...	...	...	79,690
2nd June	...	...	...	79,067
9th "	...	...	...	75,042
16th "	...	...	...	73,869

The number exceeded 15 per cent. of the total population of the district on the 19th and 26th May and 2nd June. The excess however was not large and is more than covered by the large number of famine immigrants from Indore, Bhopal and other places.

Subsequently there was a large increase in consequence of the monsoon programme of the Administration. The figures are—

23rd June	...	...	...	81,779
7th July	...	...	...	99,334
14th "	...	...	...	103,563
21st "	...	...	...	113,215
28th "	...	...	...	117,794

Q. 100.—The immigration from Native States was a constant source of anxiety. The following censuses were taken of immigrants at public works:—

			2nd December 1899.	11th March 1900.	26th April 1900.	2nd August 1900.
Marnaris	...	...	1,321	3,418	2,982	740
Beraris	...	...	1,347	715	154	27
Bhopalis	...	...	29	289	408	264
Indoris	...	...	...	1,777	2,794	870
Others, chiefly from Nimar	...	...	586	1,121	754	346
Total	...	...	3,283	7,320	7,092	2,247

The real figures are higher than this, for many immigrants, especially Indoris, endeavoured to pass themselves off as residents of the district. The number of immigrants on famine relief of all kinds in March and April 1900 cannot have been less than 10,000, about one-fifth of the total number relieved.

Q. 101.—Many of these immigrants were in a state of extreme destitution. The mortality among them was much heavier than among the local people and tended to swell the death-rate of the district.

Q. 102.—Those orphans who could be made over to friends or caste-people were so disposed of. Others have been made over to the local missions.

Q. 106.—Rabi has been displaced to a very serious extent by kharif.

HOSHANGABAD :  
The 5th January 1901. }

A. S. WOMACK,  
Deputy Commissioner,  
Hoshangabad.

MR. B. P. STANDEN, C.I.E., I.C.S., DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF BETUL.

*The President.*—When did you take charge of your district?

A.—As Deputy Commissioner, in April 1899.

Q.—Have you any idea of the previous famine of 1897?

A.—I was Settlement Officer throughout the last famine.

Q.—Can you give us your general opinion as to which famine was greater—that of 1897 or 1899?

A.—In 1897 there was very little famine compared with what there was in 1899. The natives call the famine of 1897 a famine of one crop and the famine of 1899 a famine of two crops.

Q.—In the 1897 famine which crop failed?

A.—The *kharif* of 1896.

Q.—The *rabi* of 1897 was fairly good?

A.—Yes, but it was rather a short area.

Q.—What was the *kharif* of 1897 like?

A.—*Juári* was the only crop that really gave any yield.

Q.—Was the *kharif* of 1896 an 8-anna crop?

A.—Certainly not more than 5 or 6 annas.

Q.—What was the *rabi* of 1899 like?

A.—About an average crop.

Q.—What was the *kharif* of 1898 like?

A.—I think it was a 10-anna crop.

Q.—And what was the *rabi* of 1899 like?

A.—Moderate—about 11 or 12 annas.

Q.—The famine of 1897 was a failure of one of the crops?

A.—Yes, the *kharif* of 1896 was a complete failure?

Q.—Your district was severely distressed?

A.—Not until the rains.

Q.—There was distress because the *kharif* of 1896 was a 5-anna crop?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What was the *kharif* of 1897 like?

A.—About 10 annas.

Q.—What was the *rabi* of 1898 like?

A.—That was a little below the average—about 10 or 11 annas.

Q.—The *kharif* of 1899 was a failure?

A.—Yes, almost a complete failure. The only crops that gave any yield were the early crops.

Q.—How was the *rabi* of 1900?

A.—Not a bad crop; but the yield was very short.

Q.—What were the harvests like before the famine of 1897?

A.—They were fairly good up to the years 1895 and 1896.

Q.—If you had a 10-anna *kharif* in 1897 and an average *rabi* in 1898 and a 10-anna *kharif* in 1898 and an 11-anna *rabi* in 1899—how can you say that there were signs of disaster?

A.—Our area sown was very short. We have not yet quite recovered our *kharif* area and the *rabi* area is still more backward.

Q.—If advances had been made to the people could the cultivated area in the *kharif* and *rabi* have been recovered?

A.—I do not think so; perhaps if advances had been made irrespective of the probability of repayment, the areas might have been recovered.

Q.—When did you become apprehensive of the famine of 1900?

A.—In August 1899, the first fortnight of the month.

Q.—Were your fears aroused by the orders of Government?

A.—No—before that.

Q.—Then you commenced at once to start your circle organization?

A.—I did not commence till the second half of August. I think it was in the first week of August that we were very apprehensive of famine.

Q.—You commenced your relief in September?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What measure of relief did you take in the first instance? Did you have any test-works?

A.—I had three test-works.

Q.—Were the test-works managed by the Public Works Department or by Civil Agency?

A.—By Civil Agency.

Q.—Did the test-works attract any labour?

A.—People rushed to them at once. In one of them the number filled up to 4,000.

Q.—When you opened these test-works had you sufficient establishment to cope with that rush of labour?

A.—No.

Q.—The absence of establishment, I suppose, disabled you from imposing any strict test?

A.—Only for the first few days.

Q.—After opening the test-works you opened gratuitous relief—was it by a village dole or by the establishment of kitchens?

A.—By village dole.

Q.—How long did you continue your village dole system?

A.—We had that going the whole time side by side with the kitchens.

Q.—I notice that your numbers on works rose till December and then steadily fell; and that simultaneously there was a decrease in the numbers on gratuitous relief. Do you connect this with the stiffening of tasks and the imposition of stricter tests?

A.—I think so, Sir.

Q.—Your task for earthwork was 70 cubic feet?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think that was too low?

A.—Yes, because on village work we were doing more than that. When the task was raised it no doubt helped to keep off some people. Metal breaking was substituted for road work.

Q.—Do you think that there were people on the works who were not in need of relief and that led to the fall?

A.—I do not think so. The *rabī* harvest took away some, and the *mahua* harvest took off some.

Q.—Roughly speaking the numbers fell 15 per cent. Does that mean that 15 per cent. were on work, who could do without it?

A.—I do not think that those who were not in need of relief represented 15 per cent.

Q.—Can you say that there was a percentage?

A.—There was a small number of persons who ought not to have been there.

Q.—You found that your task as originally imposed was not sufficient and therefore you raised it?

A.—Yes, I raised it 15 per cent. first, and 15 per cent. again later on.

Q.—Did the substitution of metal breaking drive off people from the work? Was metal breaking a hard work?

A.—They did not like it, and it is really harder for the carrier class.

Q.—In certain calculations that have been furnished us by the Public Works Department we find that the percentage of full wages actually earned by the labourers was 81 to 92 per cent.?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is it an indication that the full wages were 10 per cent. in excess of what they should have been?

A.—I am not prepared to say that. If the people had been paid lower wages throughout the famine, I do not know what condition they would be in. We did not reduce the task, but we altered the nature of the work and we altered the prices. Before the wages were lowered I had taken a scale little below the current price.

Q.—You started on the wage scale of the Famine Commission of 1898?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You came to the conclusion that it was too much?

A.—Yes.

Q.—On your own motion you lowered it to the lower wage basis?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Then the Local Government issued orders which practically confirmed what you had been doing?

A.—Yes. After the scale was fixed the prices began to rise, but I did not follow them because I saw that the people did not complain of short or insufficient wages.

Q.—From the commencement you had the intermediate system?

A.—Yes.

Q.—There was no minimum wage?

A.—No. Even the test-works were on the same system.

Q.—Do you think that the system is adequate for even acute famine?

A.—Yes, I think so.

Q.—You had no fining system?

A.—No.

Q.—Did you pay the head man or did you pay the individual members of the gangs?

A.—The gang *muharrir*, who distributed to the rest.

Q.—The *muharrir* divided the total wage received by the members of his gang and paid the individuals?

A.—Yes.

Q.—He did not pay any individual who did short work?

A.—No.

Q.—Had you any system of getting back copper from the *bannia*?

A.—Yes. There was some difficulty at first. We kept a register of the amount of copper coming back from the *bannia*.

Q.—Did you notice any system of credit between the *bannia* and the coolies?

A.—It never came under my notice.

Q.—You found no complaints on work regarding the distribution of wages?

A.—No.

Q.—Did you hear any complaints against the *bannia* for selling grain at higher than the authorized prices?

A.—Yes, frequently.



Q.—Did you connect that in your mind with the system of credit given by the *bannia* in the early stages?

A.—I do not know because the people were always paid daily.

Q.—Had you in reserve any system of village relief work to fall back upon?

A.—No.

Q.—Do you not think you should have such a system in reserve for out-breaks of disease?

A.—Certainly: we ought to have a system of village relief not only for such a contingency but also for people who are not really strong, who are able-bodied, but not really strong.

Q.—You could manage these village relief works through the headmen of the villages—the *mālguzārs*?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You had no organization to locate the spots for these village relief works?

A.—The charge officer could have chosen suitable sites for those works, but we had never anything like a regular plan for working such a system.

Q.—Did you give any *takāvi* at the commencement of the famine?

A.—No.

Q.—Is there much sugarcane produced in your district?

A.—Yes, in some parts.

Q.—Has the cultivation been increased?

A.—I cannot say. I remember twenty years ago the cultivation of sugarcane was 10,000 acres; this year it is 1,400, and last year it was 5,000.

Q.—Could not the cultivation be increased by the system of advances?

A.—Yes, but a majority of those who cultivate sugarcane are ruined.

Q.—Why?

A.—On account of the advances they have taken. It requires a good deal of capital to cultivate sugarcane and one bad year is ruinous.

Q.—Is sugarcane grown by people of any particular class?

A.—There are two particular classes who grow sugarcane.

Q.—Do you think that a system of mutual combination can be introduced among these men, whereby they can get money cheaper?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Would there be sufficient mutual trust and confidence in the villages to permit of their associating together for the purpose of promoting their individual credit?

A.—I do not know very much about it.

Q.—Would you be prepared to encourage such associations?

A.—Yes; but there are very few literate people in the villages.

Q.—Are people deterred from asking advances by the trouble of getting them?

A.—Certainly.

Q.—Is not some system required whereby they can obtain advances easily?

A.—There are circular orders, under which they can do so.

Q.—Are they merely temporary or are they permanent?

A.—They are permanent.

Q.—If these orders exist, why do not the people take *takāvi*?

A.—As far as my experience goes the people are willing to take it.

Q.—Why do not other officers give it?

A.—They do. It is done in this way. The distributing officer who is sometimes an Extra Assistant Commissioner goes to a village and after ascertaining whether the applicants are fit recipients for loans he advances money on the security of individual holdings on the spot.

Q.—What do you think would be the effect of granting a loan at a low rate of interest on the joint and several responsibility of a certain number of people?

A.—It would be perfectly safe. We have a similar scheme although we take mortgages.

Q.—Would you be disposed to advocate an alteration of the rules in that direction?

A.—I think it should be made optional, for in some villages it might work and in others it might not.

Q.—What would be the average crop on an average acre of land?

A.—The average produce would be a little less than eight maunds.

Q.—In what proportion of the cultivated area is wheat grown?

A.—About 75 per cent.

Q.—We have been told that the average produce per acre of land in Hoshangabad district would be Rs. 20, or allowing for varieties soil and so on, it would be Rs. 16 or Rs. 17. Would it be the same in your district?

A.—No. I should say not more than Rs. 15.

Q.—What is the incidence of your revenue per cultivated acre?

A.—A little under 4 annas per acre.

Q.—Does that represent the Government revenue?

A.—Yes, the rent is only something like 7 annas.

Q.—Are you sure it is only 4 annas an acre—i.e., an incidence of one per cent. on the income?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Then with this small, insignificant payment on account of revenue it cannot possibly be said that the *rayat* has no power to resist famine?

A.—No.

Q.—I suppose you closed your kitchens slowly?

A.—Yes.

Mr. Nicholson.—I believe there was no special artisan relief?

A.—None at all.

Q.—What is the aboriginal population in your district?

A.—Nearly one-third of the whole.

Q.—It is a forest district?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was the rainfall roughly speaking about ten inches up to the 15th of September?

A.—That was at the headquarters.

Q.—Was it more than that the preceding year?

A.—No. A great deal less; about seven or eight inches.

Q.—In the district generally?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you observe stacks of fodder in the villages?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were there any stacks from the previous year?

A.—I cannot say.

Q.—When you went round at the close of the harvest were there considerable stacks of new fodder?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did any part of that fodder remain until the end?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Generally speaking, the supply of fodder and straw is sufficient to feed the cattle?

A.—I should not say that. I should say that probably in the *kharif* the supply of fodder was larger than usual because the area under *jawar* was larger than normal; I believe that the cattle are fed much more largely on grass than on fodder.

Q.—Was there a large mortality for want of fodder?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was that amongst the better class of cattle?

A.—Chiefly among the more useless animals.

Q.—Was there any actual shortage in cultivation in consequence of the loss of cattle?

A.—The area cultivated was about 20 per cent. less than normal; a part of that was due to the want of cattle.

Q.—Were there any difficulties in the transport of fodder?

A.—Certainly not; quantities of fodder were available, but as a matter of fact there were no purchasers. We sold altogether 11,000 tons.

Q.—How much was sold in the district?

A.—About 7,000 to 8,000 tons.

The President.—How many people were employed in cutting grass for three months?

A.—Two thousand.

Q.—They were cutting grass as village relief?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You had thirty depôts?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were they near the railway?

A.—The railway was not within twenty miles.

Q.—Was the grass intended for export to other districts?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was it actually disposed of?

A.—Very little.

Q.—You had enormous stocks left?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Have these never been got rid of?

A.—Some of the grass was given away.

Q.—At what price was it available at the depôt?

A.—There were different prices in different parts of the district; near the border it was Rs. 17 a ton and the whole depôt was cleared off.

Q.—What difficulties were there about railway?

A.—We could not get waggons. At times for want of waggons we could only send 1,000 tons when we wanted to send 5,000.

Q.—Were there any immigrants from Native States in your district?

A.—There were some people from beyond the border. I refused to give them work.

Q.—You were not much troubled by immigrants?

A.—No: 1,100 persons who came from Berar were sent back?

Q.—They did not object to being sent back.

A.—No: they heard that relief works had started in Berar.

Q.—Was private charity dispensed in your district?

A.—Not to a great extent.

Q.—Did not charitable village relief operations exist in your district?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What amount was spent?

A.—Rs. 1,75,000.

Q.—Had you any special arrangement as regards the distribution of *takavi* or did you leave the people to make their own arrangements?

A.—We allowed them to make their own arrangements.

*Mr. Bourdillon.*—One feature of your relief statistics is that your relief operations lasted longer than in any other district ?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Was the increase in mortality in July and August due to an epidemic or to any particular cause ?

*A.*—Some part of the rise was due to an epidemic of cholera ; and the system of kitchens is also responsible in some degree.

*Q.*—What grain was given in the kitchen ?

*A.*—*Rice* and *jawari*.

*Q.*—Bengal rice ?

*A.*—Yes in some parts and in others Rangoon rice.

*Q.*—Was death due to the eating of rice ?

*A.*—Yes ; the people never eat rice ; it is very rarely met with.

*Q.*—Was death due also to sickness ?

*A.*—Yes and to exposure also.

*Q.*—About one-third of the population are aboriginals ?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Did they come to the kitchens ?

*A.*—Yes ; very frequently.

*Q.*—They had no scruples ?

*A.*—Absolutely none.

*Q.*—Was there any other way of relief except that ?

*A.*—No. We could have given them grain relief in the jungles. I should like to have put them on the depôt and paid them in grain or *jawari* instead of giving them depôt relief.

*Q.*—What was the work ?

*A.*—The work mostly was tank digging and clearing stones.

*The President.*—You would prefer distribution by dole in preference to the distribution at kitchens ?

*A.*—Only during the rains.

*Q.*—Otherwise you would prefer kitchen relief ?

*A.*—Yes.

*Mr. Bourdillon.*—These aboriginals ate cooked food ?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Do you think you could have introduced selection ?

*A.*—Yes ; we did it eventually.

*Q.*—Did you hear many complaints about the interference of relief with the labour market ?

*A.*—Not many ; but there were some complaints.

*Q.*—How did you meet them ?

*A.*—By getting off people as far as we could.

*Q.*—You sent all robust people wherever they were wanted ?

*A.*—Yes. There were some complaints from the people wanting field labour that the labourer preferred coming to the kitchens because admission was free. But when the crops ripened the people who were getting kitchen relief went away.

*The President.*—If you had again to start gratuitous relief would you prefer to have a self-acting testor the test of selection ?

*A.*—It would depend on circumstances.

*Q.*—As a general statement do you think that where low castes prevail selection for kitchen relief is necessary ?

*A.*—Yes.

*Mr. Nicholson.*—Your normal weeding wage was three pice ?

*A.*—Yes.

*The President.*—The weeding wage was paid in grain ?

*A.*—Never, it is only the *rabi* harvesting that is paid for in kind.



Answers by B. P. STANDEN, Esq., I. C. S., C. I. E., Officiating Deputy Commissioner, Betul, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

Q. 1.—When the rains of 1899 commenced there was every prospect that the cropped area would reach the figure at which it stood before the famine of 1896-97; but it was not expected that the kharif and rabi areas would attain the relative proportions obtaining before the famine of 1896-97, as a large area of rabi land had been under juari since 1897-98, and the area of that land had shown no tendency to decrease. The figures below will show the character of the harvests in the two preceding years:—

Year.			Per cent. of cropped area on normal.	Outturn in American Notation.	Proportion of produce to normal.
1898-99	...	...	87	79	69
1897-98	...	...	81	102	83

Q. 2.—Kharif area of famine year (1899-1900) was 369,585 acres, *i. e.*, 94 per cent. of the normal. The average of 4 years, 1891-92 to 1894-95, is taken as normal.

Q. 3.—The rainfall of the famine year during each month of the monsoon at each rain-gauge station is compared in the table below with the average of the 24 years beginning in 1875-76:—

Name of Station.		JUNE.		JULY.		AUGUST.		SEPTEMBER.		OCTOBER.		TOTAL.	
		Average.	Famine Year.	Average.	Famine Year.	Average.	Famine Year.	Average.	Famine Year.	Average.	Famine Year.	Average.	Famine Year.
Badnur	...	7'43	3'61	13'49	5'69	10'47	1'86	9'01	0'35	2'47	Nil.	43'37	11'51
Multai	...	7'08	8'73	11'76	2'24	9'11	1'67	8'37	0'40	2'02	0'06	38'38	13'10
Shahpur	...	7'08	8'48	14'02	6'05	11'23	2'75	7'27	1'62	1'62	Nil.	41'34	18'90
Chicholi	...	6'64	6'69	13'39	7'36	10'39	1'88	9'04	1'88	2'11	Nil.	41'47	17'81

The rainfall up to the end of June was almost normal or in excess of normal. That after the end of June compares as follows with the average of the same period:—

Name.			Average.	Famine year.
Badnur	...	...	35'94	7'90
Multai	...	...	31'30	4'37
Shahpur	...	...	34'26	9'42
Chicholi	...	...	34'83	11'12

I believe about half the malguzari area of the district received the rainfall of Multai, and the greater part of the rest that of Betul. Shahpur and Chicholi lie in or near the large area of Government forest. There was no rain in November.

Q. 4.—The all-round outturn of kharif of 1899 may be put at 20 per cent. of normal, and the area was 369,585 acres against a normal area (average of 4 years ending 1894-95) of 395,565 acres. The percentage of normal harvest on normal area was then 19.

Q. 5.—I take it that the average cultivator of this district, a man with one pair of bullocks, paying from Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 rent for from 10 to 20 acres, is a petty cultivator. The number of those with their dependants (taking the census average of 5 persons per family) and of the lowest class of cultivators who have no bullocks and always live from hand-to-mouth is about 120,000.

Nineteen thousand persons belong to the families of permanent farm servants, and 39,000 are dependent on casual field labour for their living. These are the only classes of labourers who depend exclusively on agriculture for a living. There are a large number of other persons who earn wages as agricultural labourers at harvest and weeding times, but at other seasons make a living by sale of grass and wood and odd jobs of many kinds. The percentage required are then (a) 37, (b) 18.

Agriculture is the only industry of any importance in the district, so that in one sense the whole population is dependent on agriculture for a living. Failure of the crops means that the weavers and potters, silversmiths, carpenters, &c, lose their market.

Q. 6.—Distribution of gratuitous relief at the houses of the people began simultaneously with work relief. In the case of the latter, proof of necessity was required by performance of a task; but we did not wait to distribute gratuitous relief until the acceptance of work relief in a particular locality had proved that distress existed.

7. The facts observed which led me to think that relief should be given when it was, were as follows:—

The state of the crops following on the conditions obtaining during the preceding 4 years, which resulted in an almost total absence of demand for agricultural labour so early as the beginning of August.

The rise in prices.

The daily arrival at my bungalow during the latter half of August and the beginning of September of bodies of small cultivators and labourers demanding assistance. These people came mostly from villages within 10 miles of head-quarters, but some hailed from the country south of the Tapti 25 to 30 miles away.

Reports of the Assistant Commissioner and Tahsildar, Betul (?) that they had observed some signs of want of condition in the children of labouring classes.

No wandering was noticed. The bands of people who came to my bungalow, came with the object of informing me of their condition, and on being informed that timely measures would be taken to keep them alive, went home again.

Q. 8.—Gratuitous cash relief distributed at the houses of the people, and organized road works on the intermediate system, were the first relief measures undertaken in the open villages, the place of the road-works was taken by grass-cutting works in the jungle tracts. The tasks exacted on the road-works were those for earth-work and moorum collection fixed as the standard by the Circular orders.

The grass-cutting task was 25 seers for an adult (over 16 years) and 12 seers for a child (12 to 16 years). Both these tasks were soon found to be too low: the former was raised 15 per cent. at first, and later 15 per cent. again, and the latter (for adults only) 20 per cent.

Q. 9.—(a) The famine programme contained lists of relief-works. These sufficed for some months. Later more work was provided by raising the roads listed in the famine programme to a class higher than that provided for in the programme. The majority of the works were such as did not require survey (metal-breaking on 1st class or 2nd class roads). The Executive Engineer began to make the survey's required for other works during the latter half of August, and no delay at all occurred owing to the necessity of waiting for surveys. The famine programme contained estimate of cost. The sites of camps had not been located before the apprehension of famine arose, but this was done in good time before the need for opening work arose.

(b) No to both questions.

Q. 10.—*Large public works.*—A programme of village works was not ready from the beginning. Works were selected as the need for them arose.

Q. 12.—(a). 19 circles were formed containing such a number of villages that the Circle Officer could get round his circle once a fortnight by seeing 5 villages in open country and 3 or 4 villages a day in jungly country. The limits of the circles were fixed and the Circle Officers selected before the end of August, and 6 of the Circle Officers were sent on to their circles at the end of that month with instructions to prepare registers of persons likely to require gratuitous relief. Later on, 29th August, these 6 Circle Officers were authorised to distribute relief in urgent cases. At the beginning of September, 2 more Circle Officers were sent out to prepare registers, and by the middle of that month all the remaining Circle Officers, except one, had been sent on their circles for the same purpose.

Six Charge Officers were required for the district to supervise Circle Officers, and these were appointed during September and October as distress crept over the district.

The above were the arrangements made for local inspection and control of cash village relief, village works, and kitchens, and for observation of the general condition of the people.

(b). No attempt was made to stimulate the local employment of labour, as it did not appear likely to be successful.

(c). In January public meetings were held at Badnur and a subscription list opened. About Rs. 7,000 was realized.

Q. 13.—A sum of about Rs. 1,500 was given out in September and October 1899, under the Land Improvement Loans Act, with the object of assisting cultivators to deepen existing wells. The demand for these loans was small, because the level of the sub-soil water was so low as to cause cultivators to despair of finding sufficient water for irrigation purposes. I did not do anything to attempt to stimulate the activity of cultivators in this direction, as I shared their anticipations of failure in any attempt to find sufficient water for irrigation. A sum of about Rs. 5,000 was distributed under the Agriculturists' Loans Act for rabi seed. Applications for a much larger sum were received, but many of them had to be rejected as it appeared certain that the land was too dry to be sown and irrigation was impossible. The intention of many of the applicants was not to use the loan for seed, but to use it for purchasing food-grain. A sum of about Rs. 200 was given out under the Agriculturists' Loan Act for improving the supply of drinking water. The sum advanced for this purpose would have been very much larger if famine labour had not been available. The money given under the Land Improvement Loans Act, and that advanced for rabi seed, was lent on the ordinary terms; that for improvement of the supply of drinking water was given on specially favourable terms, the concession extending to remission of a part of the principal, if the inhabitants of the village were unable to do what was necessary out of their own resources, and if improvement would be of no use in ordinary times.

Q. 14.—A very large number of irrigation wells are in use in the open villages of the district (say some 400 or 500 villages out of about 1,250). They are almost all used for watering sugarcane: a few irrigate vegetable gardens. Besides those in use there is a large number of abandoned wells containing in ordinary times ample water for irrigating a considerable area of rabi land. They have been abandoned generally either because the water-supply is insufficient for sugarcane, or because the land requires a rest from cane cultivation. They are not used for rabi irrigation to any extent for the reasons given in my No. of , regarding the possibility of increasing facilities for irrigation in this district. The number of irrigation wells could be largely increased in the open country, and a large number could be made in the valleys of the jungle tracts. The average depth of well water below the surface varies very much in different parts of the district. I should put it at 20 feet on the Multai Plateau and 35 feet elsewhere. It is very difficult to say what was the average depth at which sub-soil water was found at the end of the rains of 1899. Many wells were already quite dry by the beginning of October, as a rule it was only the best wells which contained any water then. These were by no means always the deepest. I should say that water was rarely more than 50 feet from the surface at any time in those wells which contained any water at all, and probably the average depth did not exceed 40 feet. It was commonly found that deepening wells beyond a certain point had no effect on the water-supply, the reason being, I think, that the water-bearing stratum is everywhere underlaid by black trap which contains no water at all. When water fails above this rock it is useless to attempt to obtain more by blasting the trap. This explains how it was that although what water there was, was at no great depth, the water-supply was exceedingly scanty in many places and insufficient for all household purposes in most villages.

As regards loans for digging wells please see answer No. 13.

Q. 52.—*Open villages.*—Until all the Public Works Department works required were opened, a few small village works were used in localities which were not less than 15 miles from a relief-work. The total number of these works did not exceed 8 or 10. Besides these, famine labour was employed everywhere in improving the water-supply by deepening wells and sinking "Jhiras" in nala beds and in digging small cattle tanks. During the rains B list workers were employed in all open tracts in various kinds of village works.

*Jungle tracts.*—After grass-cutting stopped, small village works were the only kind of work relief utilized.

Q. 53.—(a). Improvement of village and forest roads.

(b) Gathering stones off stony occupied land and using the stones to bund the small nalas and so prevent erosion.

(c) Tank digging.

(d) Eradication of bushes and stubs from occupied lands.

(e) Deepening wells and sinking "Jhiras" in the beds of nalas.

(f) In the rains weeding and carrying grain by head-loads for kitchens and depôts.

Q. 54.—*Open villages.*—Village works were conducted under the supervision of Civil agency through mukaddams.

*Jungle tracts.*—Under supervision of Civil agency by direct management.

Q. 55.—This answer applies only to the arrangements in open villages.

(a) The Charge Officer marked out sufficient work to keep the estimated number of workers employed till his next visit and explained to the mukaddam in charge and the assembled workers what each day's task was, and they were informed that if the Charge Officer did not find on his next visit that the full task had been done, the work would be closed, and they would be referred to Public Works Department.

(b) The Charge Officer measured up the work done on his return and compared it with the task due from the number of workers as per abstract statement showing the number of workers of each class employed on each working day, which was kept by the mukaddam or by a muharrir on three annas per diem under his orders.

(c) After marking out the work the Charge Officer paid to the mukaddam the amount required to pay the estimated number of units to be employed before his next visit, and instructed him as to the rates at which payment was to be made for working and rest days. The mukaddam made daily payments accordingly.

The mukaddams were informed when the work was opened that neglect of the duties explained to them would render them liable to punishment under the mukaddam rules. They had no financial responsibility beyond the obligation to spend the money for the purpose for which it was advanced and not to embezzle it.

As these works were nearly all for the immediate benefit of the village to which the workers belonged, it was found that more than full tasks was generally done. It was this which first indicated that the Public Works Department standard task was too light. The work was done under supervision of the mukaddam. The Circle Officer and Charge Officer of course inspected on their rounds.

Q. 56.—*Vide above.* The Code task system was worked to the extent shown in the last answer, 1 pice less than the wage fixed by Circular orders for relief works was paid to diggers and workers. Working children got the same wage as that fixed for public works. Employment was given to every one who wanted it in localities at least 15 miles from a public work, but the maximum number to be employed was limited by the Charge Officer when opening the work. In other places, where want of water was the primary reason for starting the work, only cultivators having standing crops in the village and their families were allowed to be employed.

Q. 57.—*Open villages.*—In small water-supply improvement works, where the number of workers required was very small, the Charge Officer selected the workers at time of starting work. This of course worked all right.

In other works the mukaddams of the villages concerned were entrusted with the duty of selecting workers. When the maximum fixed by the Charge Officer was not reached, the mukaddam had no need to exercise this power. In other cases, as was on several occasions found that the selection was improperly made: the mukaddam generally favouring his own caste-people and admitting to the work people not really in need of relief, to the exclusion of others who required it.

The last of these works in open villages closed before the end of December 1899, and the arrangements scarcely had a fair trial. The works were regarded merely as a make-shift till all the Public Works Department camps required could be opened.



*Jungle tracts.*—Admission to village works under the dépôts was allowed only on certificate signed by Charge Officer or Circle Officer. The arrangement worked well, and certainly excluded a number of people who attended the grass-cutting work without being at the end of their resources. I heard no complaint of people being wrongly excluded from relief owing to this system.

Q. 58.—The only small village works which existed near large public works were those of improvement of water-supply. The number of labourers employed on those was very small, and they were selected by the Charge Officer when opening work. These works, therefore, could not draw people from public works. I never heard that public works drew the workers from them.

Q. 59.—I am strongly of opinion that small village works on the ticket system should be largely used for employing all those persons who, though fit to do a moderate days' work, are likely to suffer in health if forced to live on public relief-works. Such would be as a rule adults over 50, pregnant women, nursing mothers, mothers with large families of children below the working age, and persons, who though not actually ill at the time, are in weak health.

In the Famine Report of this district I have given reasons for thinking that exposure on the public relief-works increased the mortality, and it is with the object of protecting the classes most liable to suffer from this exposure, inseparable from life in relief-work camp, that I propose the use of village works for them.

Q. 60.—*Special relief.*—Nearly one-third of the population of the district are Gonds and Korkus, but a large number of them live in the open villages as servants of the agricultural castes and a good many more live in more or less open country and have lost some of the characteristics of the jungle tribes. They are nowhere in this district so shy as in parts of Mandla, Bilaspur, the Chhattisgarh Feudatories, &c. It was only in three localities that any attempt was made to relieve the aboriginal tribes of the jungle tracts by public works. In all these localities they showed themselves shy of accepting relief on the works, and the dépôt system had to be resorted to for all the villages of two of the tracts and of the distant villages of the other. This was not done till the ordinary arrangements had been given a good trial and the people began to show signs of want of food. In one tract (Ranipur) the reversion to the dépôt system was delayed too long and some of those who became weak from want of food at the end of the hot weather succumbed in the rains. This reluctance to attend the works was not due to inability to perform the task: fining was light on the works in question. The people were continually leaving the works and going home for a few days. They in fact attempted to live for a month on the wages of 15 days. This class of the population showed themselves throughout the famine perfectly ready to accept kitchen and cash gratuitous relief. The adults even in the beginning hardly ever made the smallest objection to feeding at kitchens. Able-bodied persons of the jungle tribes were relieved by a system of small village works and were paid in grain. A number of dépôts were established at convenient centres in the jungle tracts. They varied in number from 20 to 30 at different times and were so situated that every village treated in this way was within 6 miles of the dépôt.

The dépôt consisted of huts for the staff, store-houses for the grain, kitchen sheds and a shed to protect the workers during the rains while waiting for payment. For staff there was a Muharrir on Rs. 15 per mensem with an assistant on Rs. 10 per mensem at large dépôts to keep the account of grain, make payments and look after the kitchen. Circle Muharrirs on Rs. 12 (Rs. 15 in the remote dépôt) varying in number according to the number of villages attached to the dépôts and the number of workers, took attendance each of his own circle and kept a task register. For supervision of the whole dépôt there was an Officer-in-charge on Rs. 35 (rising to Rs. 40 for good work). The works principally used were stone gathering and tank-digging, and in the rains weeding and carrying grain by head-loads. A task was fixed for all works, and workers were fined for short work. As the Circle Muharrirs, who calculated task due and measured task done were often not sufficiently intelligent to do their work accurately, the workers were not fined unless they did less than  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the task, which for earth-work was the same as the Code task. In the rains, as the question was further complicated by the necessity of making allowance for rainy days, fining was allowed only on the order of the Officer-in-charge. A nominal attendance roll was maintained by the Circle Muharrir in addition to his task register, and workers were of course paid nothing for days on which they were absent from work; unless they were sick, in which case they were paid the rest-day wage. Payment was made at the dépôt every 10th day. The Circle Muharrir came up with his attendance and task registers for the previous 9 days for his workers, and they were paid for days on which they had been present *minus* any fine imposed and *plus* a smaller payment for the day of payment, which was regarded as a day of rest. No other day of rest was allowed.

Charge Officers were responsible for the proper management of dépôts. Circle Officers had no connection with them beyond granting tickets of admission.

I think the system is as good a one as could be devised for the relief of the aboriginal tribes of jungle tracts. The wage paid was:—

		Work day.	Payment day.
Adults	...	15 chittaks.	12 chittaks.
Children 12 to 16	...	10 do.	8 do.

During the greater part of the time the workers found some kind of edible jungle root, leaf or fruit to supplement their earnings; but during the months from January to March they got very little in this way. The principal causes of imperfection were the difficulty of finding a sufficient number of intelligent men of the right stamp to work as Dépôt and Circle Muharrirs, and the difficulty of transporting the grain and ensuring that it should be of good quality. I think it would also have been better to have a separate Charge Officer for management of dépôts in each charge in which this form of relief was used. This would have meant increasing the staff of Charge Officers in this district from 6 to 10. The only way of ensuring a good supply of grain would be, I think, to issue grain from Government stores presided over by an officer on good pay, and to make certain that all the dépôts were fully stocked before the arrival of the monsoon.

Q. 61.—Fodder works were opened and were managed similarly to the village works under dépôts with the following differences:—

The Forest Divisional Officer was in charge of them. Charge Officers inspected and reported to him. Rangers and Sub-rangers took the place of Officers-in-charge. The ticket system was not used.

No task register was maintained. If a load was under task it was refused and the worker marked absent.

These works served the same classes as the village works under dépôts. The latter took the place of fodder works when they stopped at the end of February.

Fodder works are difficult to manage for the following reasons:—

It is very difficult to regulate the task properly. It varies for different villages owing to great difference in the lead, and it varies from day to day owing to exhaustion of the supply of grass in the nearer jungles. It takes a long time to measure the task.

It was a mistake not to have admission by ticket.

The difficulty of fixing a fair task for all works makes this imperative, unless the work were paid for by the piece, to which there are objections as the workers belong to the jungle tribes, who require tender treatment.

Q. 62.—Untill the rains broke the only workers who were engaged on work of private utility on public expense were the dépôt workers employed in field improvement works. I should say that 6,000 or 7,000 workers were employed in this way for four months (May to June inclusive). In the rains one of the principal employments of the dépôt and B list workers was weeding. They did in fact little except weed and carry grain. The dépôt workers were controlled as already described. The B list workers were controlled by the mukaddam who allotted their services to cultivators. They were instructed to give poor cultivators only the benefit of the B list workers' services and were informed that except for their obligation under the mukaddam rules they would not be interfered with. On the whole they discharged their duty conscientiously. But the B list workers having been paid in advance were often difficult to manage and always more or less lazy. They called themselves "sarkari mazdurs" and seemed to think sometimes that they were conferring a favour by working for anyone except 'sarkar.' They were warned when the money was distributed that laziness or contumacy would entail exclusion from any further instalment of relief that might be given. But in many places no second instalment was necessary and the workers knew this and the mukaddam had very little control over them. Generally in small villages the system worked very much better than in large ones. The control of Charge and Circle Officers over the employment of B list workers was limited to seeing that the mukaddam did not allow them to work in the fields of those cultivators who could pay for labour and to admonishing lazy or contumacious workers. The largest term for which B list workers were employed in any village was about 2 months, and in some it was only 1 month.

Q. 63 and 64.—No special measures were taken to relieve artizans.

Q. 65.—The only class of artisans of which many members required relief was the weavers. They all belong to the Mahar caste, and weave coarse country cloth. Their women-folk often engage in agricultural labour in the slack season, and as they are as a class not fit for physical labour they were relieved in the ordinary way.

Q. 66.—Jungles were thrown open to free grazing except a very small area of regular felling series coupes, which had been worked over during the past few years. Grass was cut and stacked at 32 grass depôts. From March onward it was offered for sale for cash and on credit at prices current in the market. A large quantity was sold for cash, but very little on credit (*vide* Famine Report for details). The reason for the small sales on credit was that the poorer cultivators, who alone were allowed to buy on credit, could not arrange for the transport of grass from the depôts to their villages. It had been intended to carry the grass to depôts in the open villages by famine labour, but as the year advanced want of water along the roads to be followed and the fear of spreading cholera infection made this impossible. It would have been better to have cut half the quantity of grass and used the balance of labour thus made available for carrying it to central villages during the cold weather while cutting was going on.

At the beginning of September 1899, mukaddams were advised by proclamation through Tahsildars and Police to place bunds across all running streams so as to hold water for cattle. A good many did this and secured a supply of water for a few months, which would not otherwise have been available. But towards the end of the cold weather the cattle had to be watered from wells except on the few large rivers. A good deal was done by famine labour to improve water-supply from wells.

Q. 67.—The Bombay Government ordered 5,000 tons of compressed grass from the Forest Department, but took only about 1,000 tons. I understand that failure to take the whole was due to the inability of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway to supply wagons sufficient to carry it away. For the same reason a great deal of grass at the depôts which it was hoped would be exported to the Rajputana States and Bombay side, remained unsold.

Q. 60-(a).—With cooked food only.

(b) The workers on small village works were always recruited from the immediate neighbourhood of the work and therefore lived at home with their dependants. The latter were relieved gratuitously in the villages when necessary.

Q. 69.—Kitchen relief was most employed. The kitchens were originally opened for children only with the object of ensuring that they should get the whole of the relief given them and not be deprived of it by their parents or guardians. Willingness to feed at a kitchen was also, at first at all events, some test of the need for relief even in the case of children. Very soon this form of relief was substituted for cash payments in the case of adults who, though all fit to attend a kitchen, were for some reason unable to do their own marketing and cooking. And in January under the orders of the Local Administration kitchens were substituted for cash relief in the case of all adults who had no genuine objection to feed at a kitchen on the score of caste. The advantages of kitchens over cash gratuitous relief are, I think, these :—

- (a) That willingness to feed at them, especially if the village of residence be some miles from the kitchen, is a test of the need of relief in the early stage of a famine.
- (b) That by relieving children at kitchens we can ensure that a part of the relief intended for them is not taken by their parents or guardians.
- (c) That adults if relieved at a kitchen cannot save a part of the relief offered them and starve themselves or eat unwholesome food, such as bran or oil-cake.
- (d) In some districts, but not here, kitchens are cheaper than cash relief. Here, as there is no indigenous rice at all, rice was hardly ever the cheapest food grain. Dal is always expensive.

In my opinion all these advantages, except possibly (b), are outweighed in the rains by the disadvantage of the exposure involved in attending kitchens and other difficulties, some of which would be peculiar to a non-rice eating country.

Q. 71.—No poor-houses were opened.

Q. 72 and 73.—In March two pauper wards, one with 50 beds in Badnur, and one with 25 at Multai, were opened. The number of inmates never reached 60. Bad cases which could not be properly treated at relief-work hospitals were sent here, as well as the few starving wanderers who were occasionally found in a condition requiring medical treatment.

Q. 74.—The number of kitchens was continually increasing until August. By the end of the hot weather it had reached about 120 (I think, but have no figures by me), and the maximum reached in the rains was 190. Kitchens were at first supposed to serve a 3-mile radius: but later, both because it was found to be too far for many persons of the classes for which kitchens are most suitable and because the large number relieved at kitchens in the rains necessitated the sub-divisions of many kitchens the radius fell to about 2 miles or less.

Q. 75.—Khichri of rice and dal with condiments:—

Nursing mothers	...	...	12 chittaks raw weight.
Other adults	...	...	9 " "
Children 12 to 16	...	...	7½ " "
" 8 to 12	...	...	6 " "
" 4 to 8	...	...	4½ " "
" 1 to 4	...	...	3 " "

One meal a day was given at about midday.

When admission to kitchens was made free in the rains, two feeding times were fixed at large kitchens: feeders from the more distant villages were fed at about 11 A. M., and from the nearer ones at about 4 P. M. This was done both with the object of enforcing some discipline and also in order to avoid overcrowding. Feeders attending late after the gate had been closed were excluded unless in bad condition.

At first people were not allowed to take food away, but after a month or two this was allowed because it appeared that no harm was likely to result and the feeders would then have the advantage of not going 24 hours between meals. In the rains this was again prohibited, because it was found that khichri went sour if kept more than a few hours, and it was believed that eating this sour stuff was more unhealthy for the feeders than getting only one feed a day.

Q. 76.—No limit of distance was fixed. Civil kitchens were opened close to relief-works. Instructions were issued to feed at the relief-work and civil kitchen at the same hour. I think if this is done there can be no objection, and the existence of a separate civil kitchen avoids probable friction between the subordinate relief officials under orders of the Civil authority and the Public Works Department officials.

Q. 77.—Admission to kitchens was restricted until the rains by the same rules as admission to cash gratuitous relief. In the rains admission to kitchens was free except in some of the remoter tracts where it was difficult to supply grain.

Q. 75A.—Circle Officers drew up the lists; they were checked by Charge Officers and District officials on tour. In the earlier months of the famine the recipients were inspected fairly regularly once a fortnight by the Circle Officer, at odd times by Charge Officers, &c. As the number of kitchens and the number of persons relieved gratuitously increased, their visits became less frequent; but more than a month very rarely passed without the recipients being inspected.

Q. 76A.—Payment was made in cash except for about a couple of months in some remote jungle tracts during the rains, when grain was scarce outside the depôts.

Payment was made weekly on the local bazar day at the house of the recipients.

Q. 78.—Cooks of the highest caste largely represented in the neighbourhood were employed. If more than one cook was required owing to the number of feeders, cooks of different castes were employed. Very few Brahmin cooks could be found. Kunbis and Bhoirs in the open country, and Gonds and Korkus in the jungles, were most often employed.

When the order first issued that all adults who had not got genuine caste scruples against it should be relieved at kitchens, it was the usual thing for adults of all, except the Mahra and Mang castes and the aboriginal tribes, to declare at first that they could not possibly feed at a kitchen even from the hand of their own caste-fellow.

These objections were disregarded and were not maintained for more than a few days. Later on it was rare to find anyone objecting on the score of caste. Telis and Sonars were, I think, as difficult to deal with as any. I think no Telis ever fed at a kitchen, either children or adults.

Q. 79.—Kitchens were supposed to be under the management of a Village Committee headed by the mukaddam and assisted by one or more muharrirs to keep the attendance register and the accounts. In many villages the Committee was so devoid of intelligence that the muharrir was practically the master of the situation. Very often no literate person was available in the village for appointment as a Committee Member. One of the

Committee was supposed to be present every day at the time grain was given to the cooks and at feeding time. Circle and Charge Officers and the District Officers on tour inspected kitchens on their rounds. In the earlier months of the famine they got an inspection about once a fortnight; later they were sometimes a month uninspected.

Q. 80 and 81.—Cheap grain shops were not opened.

Q. 82.—All but about Rs. 7,000 (total demand about Rs. 2,70,000) was suspended originally. Since the end of the famine proposals have been sent up for remitting the greater part of the suspended revenue.

Q. 83.—The suspensions were based solely on cropped area and outturn. I have proposed in making remissions to take into consideration the capacity of individual tenants to pay rent. Briefly the proposal is to remit the whole suspended arrear in villages where few or no well-to-do tenants were found at Settlement, and in other villages to take a proportion of revenue similar to the proportion of tenants who were found to be well-to-do at Settlement. The number of those tenants is now less than at Settlement, but they pay more than their proportionate share of the total rental of the village. In making suspensions the produce index of the year (area multiplied by outturn expressed in terms of American notation) was compared with that of the year of Settlement. In a large part of the district where the index would, if worked out, have been obviously 20 per cent. or less than that of the year of Settlement, the figures were not worked out in detail. In other parts the figures were calculated for each village. Suspension of the whole demand was granted if the produce index did not exceed 35 per cent. of the normal. In other villages 35 was deducted from the percentage and if the remaining figure were —

30 or more	0-8-0	annas	was collected	in the rupee.
22 to 30	0-6-0	do.	do.	do.
15 to 22	0-4-0	do.	do.	do.
1 to 15	0-2-0	do.	do.	do.

These proposals were based on the following calculation:—Cost of production including wages of a permanent ploughman, but excluding rent, covers about 70 per cent. of produce of kharif crop and about 60 per cent. of rabi, or say a mean of 65 per cent. So that unless the produce index exceeds 65 per cent. working cultivators would have earned only just enough to cover cost of production and support himself and family in the style of a farm-servant. Rent is of course often paid out of savings, earnings of daily labour, proceeds of sale of jungle produce or of bullocks, or by borrowing, by cultivators who have not reaped more than 65 per cent. of a normal crop, especially if the amount of the rent be insignificant. In the past year most of these sources of income were closed to the cultivators. But bearing in mind the fact that all cultivators do not reap the same proportion of normal produce, especially when the deficit is largely due to deficiency in cropped area as was the case last year, it was assumed that any village which had not reaped at least 35 per cent. of the Settlement normal produce could pay nothing. If the produce index were 100 per cent. of the Settlement figure it would be fair to collect in full: and if the produce index were about 65, *i. e.*, exceeded 35 by about half the difference between 35 and 100, it would be fair to collect half the revenue. This was a very rough method of calculating the ability of a village to pay, and might not have worked satisfactorily if the crop had been a little better and the method had been more widely tested.

Q. 84.—Orders regarding kharif kist suspensions were received 15 days after the date on which the demand fell due. Orders regarding June kist suspensions were received the day before the kist fell due. Proposals for both kists had been submitted some weeks before the date on which the demand fell due, and no attempt was made to collect revenue till orders were received. Few of the malguzars from whom revenue was demanded had collected any rent before they were informed of the orders of the Local Administration, and some of them experienced some difficulty in collecting so long after the crop had been reaped. To be really satisfactory proposals for suspension or remission of revenue ought to be communicated to the people concerned before the date on which rent falls due.

Q. 85.—The malguzars decided which cultivators should receive suspensions.

Q. 86.—I did not observe any such facts. In a small group of 8 or 10 villages too much suspension was allowed.

BETUL :

The 11th January 1901. }

B. P. STANDEN,

Offg. Deputy Commissioner.



MR. J. WALKER, I.C.S., DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, NIMAR.

*The President.*—You are in charge of the Nimar district?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How long have you been in charge of it?

A.—For five years.

Q.—Then you are able to compare both the famines, the 1897 famine and the 1900 famine?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Had you bad famine in Nimar in 1897?

A.—We hardly had famine, excepting high prices.

Q.—Were your seasons from 1897 to 1899 fairly normal?

A.—*Kharif* was distinctly good, and *khariif* is everything there.

Q.—Had you much famine in Nimar in 1900?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was it owing to the crop failure, or was it owing to any other causes?

A.—Owing entirely to crop failure in the old Nimar district and in part of the Harsud tahsil.

Q.—You never had very many on relief works? The highest that you had was 33,000; but gratuitous relief went up very high, 76,000? Of the 33,000 people who were on relief works and the 14,000 who were on gratuitous relief in the month of November, how many were immigrants, how many were foreigners?

A.—I think it is almost impossible to estimate exactly.

Q.—Did you take any census?

A.—I ordered a census to be taken two or three times. I do not attach much weight to the results of it.

Q.—Did you have any reason to believe that the numbers of immigrants increased as the months wore on?

A.—No; I think from Berar and Khandesh it tended rather to decrease and from Holkar territory it tended to increase.

Q.—The system of relief you carried out, was it the same as the system in other divisions?

A.—Exactly the same; but owing to rather a high mortality and the fact that people were leaving the works, we started free kitchens from the beginning of June.

Q.—Everybody who wished had access to the kitchens; was there any restriction?

A.—Not in June; except for those living within five miles of the relief works.

Q.—Do I understand you to say that the persons who lived within five miles of relief works were told to go to the works?

A.—Yes; a man who was able-bodied would not be admitted to the kitchen if there were relief works near.

Q.—I notice the system of village doles was introduced to a small extent?

A.—Yes; to a very small extent after kitchens were fully extended.

Q.—Did you ever institute a comparison between the effectiveness and the economy of the two systems, village kitchens and doles?

A.—No.

Q.—Kitchens are no doubt easier if you have to relieve everybody that comes; but if you have to exercise any principle of selection, would you not prefer to work through the local agency, the *panchayet* of the village? It would select those who are fit to receive relief?

A.—I rather think the *panchayet* might be inclined to be too liberal.

Q.—Could that tendency not be curbed?

A.—It could in particular cases.

Q.—Did you give large suspensions?

A.—Not very large, about Rs. 1,23,000 out of Rs. 2,80,000.

Q.—In your district is irrigation practicable?

A.—On a small scale. There are many wells.

Q.—Are the people in your district fairly well off in ordinary times?

A.—I should say so.

Q.—Is much of the new land, much of the jungle land being taken up?

A.—There is some increase there.

Q.—Do you think the difficulties passed through will leave any permanent trace in the district?

A.—Wonderfully little, I think.

Q.—Are the rents high?

A.—No; I do not think they are high.

Q.—How do they run for wheat land?

A.—I think wheat land is mostly irrigated. I think Rs. 4. The revenue incidence is very low, about eight or nine annas.

Q.—It must form a very small proportion of the gross produce?

A.—Quite insignificant.

Q.—And not to be taken into account in an estimate of the capacity of the people to resist the pressure?

A.—Certainly not.

Mr. Nicholson.—I think you found in immigrants not very much trouble?

A.—Not much trouble.

Q.—They were numerous?

A.—They were numerous. I could detect them in places like poorhouses and kitchens.

Q.—On the relief works were you able to discover how many were foreigners and how many were immigrants?

A.—No.

Q.—You think the effective cattle were all kept in good condition?

A.—I think so. I believe the people seemed to keep them in good condition except just at the ploughing seasons, when the new grass was coming out.

Q.—Were the cattle starving, just before the new grass came out and when the new grass came, did they feed heavily?

A.—Yes.

Q.—On the whole the mortality among cattle did not affect the cultivated area?

A.—The cultivated area was about 10 per cent. above the normal.

Q.—Was there much private charity in your district?

A.—Not very much. In the town of Burhanpur a good deal.

Q.—Were there cheap grain shops?

A.—The people organized grain shops.

Q.—Entirely a private organization?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What persons did it serve?

A.—The poorer classes, who were given tickets by the local committee.

Q.—Did the *mālguzārs* afford any special assistance by private charity in your district?

A.—Very little as far as I can make out.

Mr. Bourdillon.—About your death-rate, did your district suffer very much from cholera?

A.—It suffered very severely from cholera.

Q.—Towards the end of May?

A.—In June, July, and August.

Q.—You probably had a small rainfall in your part of the province?

A.—Yes; about 8 against 32 inches.

Q.—That contributed very much to the cholera, the want of water?

A.—That did not contribute to cholera.

Q.—Was not your water-supply very short?

A.—The cholera was worse in July and August.

Q.—And these large figures—14·9, 14·34, and 16·34—are due to cholera?

A.—Yes.

The President.—In Nimar I find that the percentage of full wages actually earned was the least in the province, 71 to 75, as shown in the figures; do you think the wages were too high?

A.—No; I think they were just sufficient.

Q.—How is it, then, that people contented themselves with earning 20 per cent. less than the maximum wage they could earn?

A.—I think there must be some error in the figures.

Q.—Had you a high task?

A.—We had only 10 per cent. above the standard.

Q.—Had you earth-work or had you stone-breaking?

A.—We had both. The stone-breaking task was very mild.

Q.—Your people contented themselves with having 75 per cent. of the task and rested satisfied with 75 per cent. of wages; Were they in good condition?

A.—As a whole they were.



Answers by J. WALKER, Esq., I. C. S., Deputy Commissioner, Nimar, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

Q. 1.—When the rains of 1899 commenced the outlook in the two principal tahsils of the district (Khandwa and Burhanpur) was satisfactory. The previous agricultural history there was on the whole good. They were essentially kharif tracts. The partial failure of crops in 1896 had been the only calamity for many years and it had been followed by the bumper kharif harvest of 1897 and the good kharif harvest of 1898. Thus, though the distress of 1897, which had hardly reached the acute stage, except in respect of the prices of food grains, must have resulted in diminution of savings and increased indebtedness on the part of the poorer classes, these two tahsils were on the whole in a fairly prosperous condition up to September 1899. In the third tahsil (Harsud) the conditions were worse. The tract at the time of Settlement in 1894 had been a largely rabi-growing one, 70 per cent. of the area being under these crops. It had shared in the bad years for rabi which began from 1894, and cultivation had by 1899 decreased by some 11 per cent. The evil was however greater than that represented by the mere fall in area, as the proportion of rabi and kharif cultivation had become reversed, and the percentage of the more paying rabi cultivation was now only 30 per cent. as against 70 in 1894. Harsud had latterly not been quite so fortunate in its rainfall as the other two tahsils, and the comparatively paying kharif crops of cotton and tilli had had outturns of 90 and 60. The rabi harvest in both 1897-98 and 1898-99 had been poor. Remissions for part of the malguzari arrears had had to be obtained in 1899. The tract also consisted largely of comparatively lately established villages, many of these ryotwari ones, inhabited by Korkus, and credit generally was less there than in older established tracts. Lastly, the people were accustomed to rely largely on the early food crops of maize, sawan, &c., about the period of September-October, and these crops had been practically an absolute failure.

Q. 2.—Kharif sowings at the commencement of the rains in 1899 showed an increase over that of the preceding year in all three tahsils. About 107 per cent. of the normal kharif area was sown. I have taken the average of six years from 1899-1900 to represent the average area.

Q. 3 (a).—The rainy season in Nimar may be taken as from 1st June to 1st October. Little rain falls after the latter date. The normal for the past 33 years is 27·38 inches.

(b). The actual rainfall for the above period in 1899 at Khandwa was 8·07 inches or 32 per cent. of the average.

(c). After July, Khandwa had 1·95 inches about the middle of August, and Harsud and Burhanpur 4·06 and 3·63 about the same time. After that date, Khandwa received only 0·50 cents., and Harsud 0·41 cents, while Burhanpur received 2·15 inches in the middle of September. This fall however was not well distributed. For the bulk of the district the rains may be considered to have ceased in the middle of August.

(d). I append a statement showing the rainfall at Head-quarters received in each of the four months in question as compared with the average amounts received in these months:—

1st to 27th June	...	{	Average	...	7·12
			1899	...	2·54
28th June to 25th July	...	{	Average	...	7·89
			1899	...	3·03
26th July to 29th August	...	{	Average	...	8·28
			1899	...	1·95
30th August to 26th September	...	{	Average	...	4·44
			1899	...	0·50

The insignificance of the fall in 1899 in August and September, as compared with the average, is very marked.

Q. 4.—Only cotton, til, and tur gave appreciable outturns. I should not put the total outturn of the kharif harvest at more than 12 per cent.

Q. 5.—The figures for the district (excluding the portion transferred from Hoshangabad) at last census, were:—

Owners	...	...	...	...	174
Tenants	...	..	...	...	235
Farm servants	...	...	...	...	35
Labourers	...	...	...	...	147

The proportion of tenants to be classed as petty cultivators is not immediately ascertainable. Petty Malik-makbuza holders classed as owners might be considered as petty cultivators. I should estimate the percentage of cultivators paying under Rs. 10 as between 30 and 40 per cent. in Khandwa and Burhanpur, and from 40 to 50 per cent. in Harsud.

Q. 6.—The rainfall of 1899 was so extraordinarily deficient as to render an almost complete failure of crops inevitable. From this fact and the prevalence of high famine prices the general necessity for relief was assumed, but the necessity of relief for individual able-bodied persons was determined by their compliance with the labour test on relief-works.

Q. 7.—The machinery of relief was set in motion before such actualities were observed, as deterioration in condition of the people, increased mortality, or increase of crime (though the latter rose in October). But the totality of the crop failure, and the high prices of food grain were palpable. In the case of Harsud, the circumstances mentioned in the answer to No. 1 indicated that the need for relief there was urgent. I toured in that tahsil in August and September 1899.

Q. 8.—A scheme of village relief organization was completed in August. The first actual relief measure was the distribution of gratuitous relief to the destitute incapables. Preparations for the early opening of large relief-works were taken in hand. The circumstances of the Harsud Tahsil above explained, were such as to leave the people peculiarly resourceless. This was particularly the case in the centre of that tahsil, where the rainfall had been specially scanty. Therefore immediate relief, which, until works could be opened, had to be gratuitous, was afforded there under Rule 23 of Famine Circular No. F-3, dated the 14th August 1899. Kitchens were opened at convenient centres, where the destitute able-bodied could obtain relief temporarily, and village relief was also granted to the children and incapable dependants of the poor labourers? the expression 'unable to work' being somewhat liberally interpreted in the case of women burdened with young children.

On the opening of the works, however, these kitchens were closed, the children being then generally in excellent condition and the numbers remaining entitled to village relief, after revision of the lists as mentioned in Famine Circular No. 34 of the 20th November 1899, being few and scattered. The period of this change was co-incidental with the reaping of what little tilli and cotton harvest there was, and hence there was no rush on the works, but the persons struck off village relief came on the works gradually. In the Khandwa and Burhanpur tahsils, of which the previous history was good, gratuitous relief was from the outset confined to the destitute incapable. From the 20th October, onwards, relief to the able-bodied throughout the district was supplied only by relief works on which the labour test could be enforced.

Q. 9.—A famine works programme was in existence. This was considered with reference to the situation at a Conference with the Superintending Engineer and Commissioner early in September, and later in the same month at a Conference held by the Chief Commissioner. For some works surveys and estimates of cost were ready. For others they were prepared as expeditiously as possible.

Q. 10.—Large public works were contemplated as the backbone of the relief system. The conditions of the district did not point to a large employment of village works. The physical configuration of the country afforded few instances of useful projects for village works. Tank work in particular being conspicuously wanting. The outlying tracts were at first served by labour afforded by grass-cutting, Government depôts being opened wherever feasible, and a large amount of labour being employed by private purchasers of grass. When grass-cutting was over, the Punasa tract was served by the Chikdalia and other forest tank works, the southern part of Harsud by the Asapur Public Works Department camp, the Dhertalai-Manjrod tract in the Tapti Valley by the land reclamation work under special Assistant Settlement Officer and subsequently by a camp for the Khandwa-Akola-Basim Railway; a small amount of fuel-felling employment was also given by the Forest Department in the Asirgarh Range which, however, was also served by the Borgoan and Borda Public Works Department camps. The district was provided with 8—10 large Public Works Department works at convenient centres. There was no difficulty in providing useful work on these works, and they were never swamped or seriously disorganized by the crowding of applicants for relief.

Q. 11 (a).—Test works were not opened as such, though as the labour test was enforced, they served the purpose. No work opened was discontinued from paucity of applicants for relief.

(b). Poor-houses were opened in November in Harsud, Khandwa and Burhanpur, chiefly owing to these places being on main lines of communication.

The persons relieved at these institutions were chiefly foreign paupers in need of medical treatment and their attendant relatives. In Burhanpur the numbers were swollen by the temporary retention of foreigners with a view to deportation. It was not found necessary in Khandwa to enlarge the poor-house to any great extent as foreigners and persons from the interior of the district were constantly eliminated from the kitchen and sent to their homes or to the relief-works. The average total number in the three poor-houses together averaged only 207. The extent to which the population consisted of foreigners is shown by the fact that out of the total number of deaths, *viz.*, 525,362 were of known foreigners.

(c) (i). Kitchens were an invariable accompaniment of works.

(ii). In the early stages of the famine, except temporarily in Harsud as mentioned in answer 8, the circumstances were not such as to call for a general organization of kitchen relief.

Later on in February, in view of the rising death-rate and the known intensification of distress, a general organization of kitchen relief was ordered although the children up till then had not been generally found to show signs of under-feeding.

(d). Local charitable committees were formed in Khandwa and Burhanpur in the beginning of 1900. In Burhanpur a cheap grain shop had been arranged for by the townspeople in August 1899.

(e). Forest concessions were practically the earliest measure of relief afforded. *Bona fide* agricultural cattle were allowed to graze in Government forests on credit as soon as failure of the rains was apprehended, and remission of grazing dues was sanctioned as soon as that failure was established. In September collection of head-loads of grass, fallen wood and edible products was allowed for.

Q. 12.—Early in August 1899, the organization for village relief as indicated in Famine Circular No. F-3 of 14th August 1899, was worked out. The full organization was completed and posted in Harsud by early in September, and in Khandwa and in Burhanpur by early in October. The complement of Charge Officers was completed later on.

Q. 13.—Owing to the great dryness of the soil in the autumn of 1899, loans for rabi sowing would have been useless. But the improvement of water-supply by the deepening and digging of wells was encouraged by (a) special loans under (Agriculturists Loans Act) in the case of those unable to make the necessary improvement without the assistance of a loan, free of interest and in cases of works not of value as permanent improvements, with a remission of principal varying from 15 to 50 per cent., and (b) by the grant of loans under the Land Improvement Act for works likely to prove of permanent utility. The number of loans granted under (a) was 121 and the amount advanced Rs. 8,635, and the number of loans granted under (b) was 159 and the amount advanced Rs. 10,845.

Q. 14.—Irrigation wells are used considerably in Khandwa and Burhanpur tahsils. According to latest information the number of irrigation wells would appear to be 3,332. The digging of wells was encouraged by loans as mentioned under question 13. Irrigation wells are chiefly used for rabi cultivation, principally wheat. About  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the usual irrigated rabi area was fairly successfully cultivated, but the supply failed in many wells.

Q. 19.—Large public works were first opened except as regards grass-cutting.

Q. 20.—These works were under the management of the Public Works Department, subject to a power of control by the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of all points affecting the efficiency of relief. The scale of establishment, &c., is laid down in General Order No. F-7<sup>287</sup>/<sub>330</sub>, of 20th September 1899. I do not think that there was any avoidable delay in opening the works.

Q. 23.—Admission to all works was free to all persons ready to submit to the labour test. In the case of one work (Mortakka) admission was limited to ticket-holders as a precaution against it being overcrowded by foreigners, as the work was peculiarly situated with reference to Indore territory, but tickets for that work were issued to residents of the district without any system of selection.

There was no distance test or compulsory residence on works. Workers even from near villages generally preferred to reside on the works.

Q. 24.—In the case of villages in the immediate vicinity of a work, a number of workers will always come to work who will be unwilling to continue on the work when the site is removed a few miles. With the exception of such workers (whose need for relief is doubtful).

I think that a large public work can well serve a large area, say 15 to 20 miles radius. Once people have made up their minds to leave their villages for a lengthened period for works, it would not seem that the distance of a work is of much moment. When Borgaon camp was closed, instances were met with of persons who preferred to go to the Manjrod camp, some 30 miles off, rather than to the Jaswari camp under 10 miles off. Many of the foreign workers had come over 100 miles.

Q. 25.—Officers of the Public Works Department were subordinate to the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner as mentioned under question 30 in accordance with paragraph 7 of Famine Circular No. 26 of 6th October 1899. This subordination was not always very clearly understood by the Executive Engineer.

Q. 26.—Each charge had always an Officer-in-charge, appointed by the Commissioner, generally from the Naib-Tahsildar class or its equivalent or respectable non-officials. His salary was Rs. 100 rising by monthly increments of Rs. 10 dependent on approved service to Rs. 150. He became a Public Works Department Officer. He had full authority in the matters mentioned.

Q. 30.—The classification of able-bodied men as 'diggers' and weakly men and women generally as carriers, under paragraph 6 of Famine Circular No. 41 of 22nd February 1900, worked well practically.

Q. 32.—I think that if relief is started in time a system of payment by results can be adhered to. To the great majority of those who leave works, I am inclined to think that any system of work relief worth the name would be distasteful.

Q. 34.—I think the scale of wages adopted was adequate. On the whole, workers maintained or improved their condition. I am not aware of any evidence of saving. At one work (Ajanti near Khandwa) it appeared that the workers were not in a position to spend money on expensive luxuries. The local liquor contractor had a right to open a shop near there, but had not availed himself of it. On the opening of the work he opened a liquor shop, but soon closed it again for want of custom. As the bonded warehouse system is in force, however, liquor was necessarily high priced.

Q. 35.—A rest-day wage was always given.

Q. 36.—I do not think that any reasonable task would generally be exacted without the liability to fining below the minimum.

Q. 38.—Payment was made daily. This is quite practicable and longer intervals seem open to serious objection.

Q. 40.—In task work gangs payment was made to the individual; in intermediate gangs to the head of the gang. I should be inclined to adopt individual payment generally.

Q. 46.—The grain basis for wages was fixed by the Deputy Commissioner. It was based on the cheapest readily available grain in use, and the price of imported teora was also taken into consideration under Famine Circular No. F-32 of 1st November 1899. Small variations in prices were neglected.

Q. 52.—Kindly see answer 10.

Q. 60.—Aboriginals are fairly numerous in the district, particularly Korkus in Harsud. The total number in the district cannot immediately be given owing to separate census figures for the portion transferred from Hoshangabad not being available.

From the outset and throughout the operations, aboriginals were dealt with on the task work system on public works. They were not backward to take relief. At the large Public Works Department work at Asapur in Harsud, where Korkus predominated, they took more kindly to work and performed fuller tasks than any at any other camps in the district. As the hot weather advanced they evinced disinclination to go to or remain on works even when near their villages. They took very readily to kitchens. Thus in Harsud, where aboriginals are most numerous, in February and March 40 per cent. of the census population was relieved on Public Works Department works, while, from the end of June to middle of August, from 40 to 47 per cent. of the population fed at kitchens.

Q. 61.—Grass-cutting operations under the control of the Forest Department were started in the end of September and continued till April. The maximum number of depôts open was 22, and the maximum number of persons relieved about 3,000. The grass-cutting

operations served the inhabitants of the forest tracts, but a large amount of employment was afforded them also by cutting-grass for purchasers. Forest tank works were also done and fuel-cutting to a small extent. Forest road works were much restricted by want of water.

Q. 62.—What was termed B list relief (paragraph 8 (B) (VIII) of Circular No. F-49, dated the 7th May 1900), was given only in the poorest and most resourceless parts of the district. The great bulk of this relief was given from the beginning of August till the beginning of September. During that period as far as the rains permitted, B list labourers were generally employed in weeding the fields of poor cultivators, who were too poor to overtake the work themselves. In this way a considerable amount of useful work was done though no doubt the B list labourers, owing to the frequent interruptions owing to the wetness of the weather or the soil, had often an easy time. The maximum number relieved was 6,283.

Q. 63.—The old town of Burhanpur is almost entirely dependent on the weaving industry. There special relief for weavers was organized in November 1899. The maximum number relieved was 7,244 in July.

Q. 64.—They showed great reluctance to go on ordinary works. The majority were weavers of finer sorts of cloth. Most of the males would have been fit for ordinary labour, at least as carriers, although at the risk of injuring their manual dexterity, but a large number are Muhammadan weavers whose females are *parda-nashin*.

Q. 65.—The operations appear to have been successful from the point of view of relief. No excessive mortality or privation seem to have occurred amongst weavers. If the prices which may be fairly expected are realized for the stock of cloth on hand, this form of relief should, in the end, be very economical. I consider that sufficient was done in this respect.

Q. 66.—In August 1899, when scarcity of fodder was apprehended, agricultural cattle were allowed to graze in Government forests, provisionally, on credit, while for other cattle licenses had to be purchased as usual. In September 1899, forests were thrown open to free grazing of agricultural cattle. Cultivators who had never previously sent cattle to graze in Government forest did so very largely owing to scarcity of grazing in villages. Altogether some 66,000 cattle more than in the previous year appear to have resorted to the forests, but some of the excess is due to foreign cattle coming in larger numbers.

The Nimar cultivators early apprehended the situation, and cut and removed large quantities of grass from the forests for their future want. The total quantity removed amounted to 81,993 tons against only 10,150 tons in the previous year. This includes that cut and removed for export, but excludes that removed on free head-loads. Thus between the grass which they had collected in unusual quantities and such karbi as they had got from their fields, the cultivators had secured sufficient for the maintenance of their effective cattle. This was apparent later on, when there was hardly any demand for Government grass offered at so reasonable a price as Rs. 6 per ton.

As regards water-supply, the manner in which wells, nalas and even large rivers dried up in the autumn of 1899 suggested the worst apprehensions. The rate at which the water disappeared was not, however, maintained. Pools in the large nalas held out through the hot weather, and the digging of jhirias in the beds of streams afforded considerable relief. The responsibilities of malguzars and others in the matter were also impressed on them.

Special famine loans and loans under the Agriculturists Loans Act were granted. On the whole, though cattle had in many cases to travel considerable distances for drinking, yet any serious privation or mortality of cattle on account of want of water did not occur. Cattle disease, specially foot and mouth disease, and small-pox, were prevalent in the cold months. Apart from the ravages of these diseases, I am inclined to think that the greatest destruction amongst cattle occurred at the time of the setting in of the rains. The delay in the setting in of the rains, and consequently in the appearance of new grass proved, a last straw to their weakened constitution, and the diarrhoea induced by the early grass, when it had appeared killed very many.

Q. 67.—Looking to the amount of grass in the depôts and the fodder scarcity in the district, little was available for export.

Q. 68.—Dependents, other than infants-in-arms of workers, were practically invariably relieved with cooked food at kitchens on all works.

Q. 69.—Kitchen relief was the backbone of the system of gratuitous relief from the time that kitchen relief was generally organized. In the case of children it ensures that the relief reaches the children themselves. In the case of adults, the acceptance of cooked food is itself a test, particularly in the earlier stages. If the condition of physical disability for work is not very strictly interpreted, as is advisable, as distress deepens and the rains approach. Cash relief is particularly difficult to distribute with sufficient discretion, and it is inadvisable

to encourage paupers to further run down in condition by the hope of qualifying for cash relief. Hence anyone entitled to relief, who could reasonably be expected to attend a kitchen, was required to do so as a condition of relief.

Q. 70.—Only when kitchen relief was opened to the able-bodied.

Q. 71.—Three poor-houses were opened in the district, *viz.*, at Harsud, Khandwa and Burhanpur. The classes of people and the numbers have been dealt with in answer to question 11 (b).

Q. 72.—Poor-houses were not used for the reception of recalcitrant relief workers. As previously explained the poor-houses were only on a small scale.

Q. 73.—Poor-houses were regularly weeded out.

Q. 74.—The rains cannot be said to have fairly set in till about the 8th of July 1900, though there were some fairly local showers before the end of June. The first week of July was rainless and caused much anxiety. In the end of June, the number of civil kitchens open was 89. The maximum number open during the rains was 108. In Famine Circular No. 49, dated the 7th May 1900, it was suggested that there should be at least one kitchen for a 3-mile radius, or 27 square miles area. But some excess in the number actually required over that calculated on the above principle was unavoidable owing to the impracticability of arranging all circles symmetrically, either owing to convenient kitchen villages not coinciding with the centre of such circles, or to portions of the country being cut off during the rains from easy communication with kitchen villages. Roughly speaking, therefore, a kitchen was expected to serve a radius of about 3 miles.

Q. 75.—The ration provided was:—

For adults over 14 years	...	...	...	9 chittaks
For children 10—14 "	...	...	...	6 "
Do. 7—10 "	...	...	...	4½ "
Do. under 7 but not-in-arms	...	...	...	3 "
Nursing-mothers	...	...	...	12 "

The kitchri consisted of five parts of rice to one part of dal (mostly masur) with little salt at the rate of about half a chittak to a seer. To these were added, as far as possible—

Onions	...	...	...	½ chittak per head
Turmeric	...	...	...	¼ " "
Oil	...	...	...	¼ " "

Meals were distributed once a day at fixed time, generally 11 A. M. People were given an opportunity to feed on the premises, but what food remained off, they were allowed to take away, particularly the nursing-mothers, who received one-third extra ration of cooked food.

Q. 76.—No kitchens were opened (except at the two large towns) within 3 or 4 miles of relief-works. These all possessed fully organized kitchens, and I required them to serve the areas in their vicinity by admitting persons to kitchen relief under Rule 92 (b) of the Public Works Department relief rules. When the works closed or moved on, civil kitchens took the place of Public Works Department ones.

Q. 77.—At the outset admission to kitchens was practically free to children of the poor. but in the case of adults was restricted to those with some degree of physical unfitness. Later on it was free to all who came to receive cooked food. Again, when the demand for labour arose, the able-bodied were gradually sent away.

Q. 77. (a).—The ration was controlled by the Medical subordinate in charge. The great bulk of the inmates were on special diet. Others generally received the kitchen ration.

Q. 77. (b).—The village gratuitous relief lists were drawn up by the Circle Officer with the assistance of the patwari and the mukaddam, and they were checked by Charge Officers in the course of their rounds. The recipients were inspected by the Charge and Circle Officers.

Q. 77. (c).—Payment was made (a) in cash, (b) fortnightly up to the middle of January, and afterwards monthly; (c) at the homes of the recipients. In the Harsud Tahsil payments were made mostly through the mukaddams, the recipients being mustered at the time of payment by the Circle Officers.

Q. 77.—(d) The admission of able-bodied adults to kitchen relief in the rains went beyond the Code provisions. This was from June to August. At that period workers had nearly all returned to their villages as regards those who had held out till then without relief, their resources were then at the lowest ebb, and I have been assured by several intelligent malguzars that many petty cultivators and others, who had managed to pull through till then, would not have been able to subsist in their villages until crops sprung up and credit and confidence was restored but for kitchen assistance. I think that no measure less comprehensive would have been a sufficient safeguard against serious privation from June to August.

Q. 78.—Except in purely aboriginal tracts, the principle of employing high-caste cooks was adhered to, as the value of kitchens as a safeguard against privation would otherwise have dangerously lessened if low-caste cooks were generally employed. With the exception of the case of Brahmins, Baniyas, Rajputs, Kunbis, Malis, Darjis, Raj-gonds, Gujars, Gaolis, Deswals, Telis and Bhilalas, there appear to have been no reluctance at all. Of the above-mentioned castes, the poorer members of all of them (except Brahmins) attended kitchens before long, and it would seem that the reluctance was not sufficiently strong to deter any considerable number of really deserving cases from accepting relief. Of course the precise degree of actual destitution is more doubtful the higher the individual is in the social scale. Also, in the hearts of all paupers, there was a strong preference for relief in the form of cash doles at home, but, from the beginning, it was clearly understood that no one who could be reasonably expected to attend a kitchen was eligible for cash relief.

Q. 79.—A number of kitchens were in charge of Police and Forest officials. In other villages a schoolmaster, branch postmaster, stamp vendor or patwari was in charge of a kitchen, and where such an arrangement was not feasible or advisable, a special muharrir was entertained. His pay varied with the numbers and with the facility of obtaining reliable muharrirs in particular localities. These persons worked under the immediate supervision of local men of standing or of small committees. Their work was also carefully and frequently supervised by the Circle and Charge Officers, and during the rains also by the Hospital Assistants on kitchen duty.

Q. 80 and 81.—A cheap grain shop was opened in Burhanpur in August 1899 by private subscriptions. Prices had just then commenced to rise and no time was lost in making purchases at the cheapest possible rates. The big wholesale dealers, instead of subscribing in cash, gave grain at rates varying from 1 to 2 rupees a palla (of 120 seers) cheaper than the market rates. Grain was purchased from villages having large stocks, and large purchases were also made direct from Akola and Hyderabad through private agency so as to save commission, &c. Tickets were issued by a shop committee to the deserving poor—no one being given more than 2 seers any one day. Wheat, juar and rice were sold from October 1899 to May 1900, generally from 2 to 2½ annas in the rupee cheaper than the market rates. Altogether about 5,800 maunds were sold. As sales were restricted to ticket-holders, the operations of the shop do not appear to have discouraged private trade, and thus induced any rise in prices. The effect seems principally to have been to check violent fluctuations in local prices. All subscriptions were returned out of the sale-proceeds, and the subscribers contributed the surplus of Rs. 2,900 to public purposes.

Q. 82.—The land revenue demand for 1899-1900 (malguzari) was Rs. 2,85,776. Out of this Rs. 1,23,000 was suspended. Remission proposals have been submitted and are under consideration.

In ryotwari, out of a demand of Rs. 90,000, Rs. 16,000 were collected.

Q. 83.—Suspension was necessitated by the failure of crops, but was based on the result of rent collection made by the malguzars before the Government kists fell due. In the Khandwa and Burhanpur tahsils, the cultivators and the malguzars had had good seasons previously and had been accustomed to prompt and regular payment of rent and revenue. By the middle of January very considerable realizations of rent had been made. As the present might be regarded as the first year of actual famine in these tahsils, it was probable that if stringent pressure had been brought on the malguzars, nearly the whole of the demand might, though with difficulty, have been recovered. That course, however justifiable in view of the share of profits retained by malguzar in normal seasons, was obviously inadvisable on several grounds. On the other hand, the rental collections which had been made without difficulty were a factor to be considered. The proposals for suspension of revenue, therefore, were based largely on consideration of this factor. They were to the following effect:—

(a) In cases where less than four annas of rent was collected by the malguzars, suspension of both kists was proposed in so far as the malguzar had not actually paid.

(b) In cases where from four to eight annas of rent was collected, I proposed to collect what was in excess of four annas.



(c) In cases where over eight annas up to 14 annas of rent was collected, collection of revenue in proportion to the rent collected was proposed.

(d) In cases where over 14 annas of the whole rent had been collected, I proposed collection of both the kists.

Of the uncollected amount, Rs. 1,23,000 were suspended on the above principles, and were distributed as below:—

					Rs.
Khandwa Tahsil	...	...	...	...	54,000
Burhanpur „	...	...	...	...	42,000
Harsud „	...	...	...	...	27,000
Total					1,23,000

Practically the whole of the demand in the portion of the Harsud Tahsil, transferred from Hoshangabad, was suspended.

In ryotwari, collection was made chiefly from those tenants who had been more fortunate with the tilli and cotton crops, the former being a comparatively more important crop in ryotwari villages; the rent-paying capacity of the year's outturn was probably rather better than in malguzari villages.

The general capacity of the individual to pay was not taken in account, apart from rent collection realized by malguzars except at the outset, to some extent in the case of some malguzars in Harsud with regard to old arrears aggregating some Rs. 5,000 only.

Q. 84.—Enquiries as to the revenue-paying capacity and rent collection were started in December 1899. Summary proposals on account of the first kist were wired on 6th January 1900. Sanction for suspension was received on 17th February 1900. The first kist was due on 1st February 1900, and up till receipt of sanction, collections were made only on the lines indicated in answer No. 83.

Q. 86.—I think that sufficient relief was given by suspension. In the case of the malguzars of Khandwa and Burhanpur, the treatment was distinctly very liberal. No instances have been noticed of malguzars collecting rent in excess of that allowed by the suspension of revenue. That the tenants were not crippled by the payment made is indicated by the fact that a larger area than ever was sown in 1900.

Only in a few instances did malguzars fail to credit the proportionate revenue. Practically, no complaints of hardship were received from malguzars or tenants after the issue of the orders. The amount of rent litigation was considerably less than in the previous year.

Q. 87.—The percentage on relief in the district exceeded 15 per cent. from January to September. The intensity of crop failure was sufficient to account for this, but the numbers were swollen by the presence of immigrants.

Q. 88.—I believe that relief was generally sufficient throughout. The only respect in which, I think, it was excessive, was in the case of able-bodied residents of villages in which kitchens were actually situated. For these people there was no distance test, and many persons unwilling to go 2 or 3 miles for food partook of it in their own village kitchens. This constitutes, in my opinion, the strongest ground against multiplying the numbers of kitchens in any area beyond that mentioned in the answer to question 74.

Q. 89.—All classes except proprietors were fairly represented on works in Harsud. In the Khandwa and Burhanpur tahsils, Banjara, Bolahis (Dhers) and Nahals were very fully represented on works, and the cultivating classes only to a limited extent. In kitchens cultivators were numerous.

Q. 90.—The famine of 1897 was not severely felt in this district.

Q. 91.—The contraction of private credit was a matter of general complaint amongst agriculturists, and, no doubt, during the period in June and July 1900, that the rains appeared to be holding off, it was at a standstill.

Q. 92.—I think that the Code test are adequate for work relief.

Q. 94.—Vital statistics are supplied by Kotwals through the Police.

Q. 95.—The use of unfamiliar food in consequence of the comparatively high prices of the ordinary staple food, juari, must have contributed to the mortality.



Q. 96.—The rainfall in 1899 in Nimar was both absolutely and relatively the shortest in the Province. This must necessarily have affected the mortality. The action taken in the matter of loans for improvement of water-supply has been mentioned under question 13. The responsibilities of malguzars in the matter were impressed on them from the outset. Government recognized its responsibility in ryotwari villages and 109 wells were sunk or deepened in ryotwari villages at a Government expense of Rs. 5,275. All Police posts as well as all works were supplied with permanganate of potash and it was freely used.

Q. 97.—(a) There are provisions in the Public Works Department works rules and elaborate instructions were drawn up on the spot on each work by the Civil Surgeon and carried out by the Officer-in-charge and the Medical subordinates in charge of the camp. The system, which was invariably adopted from the outset, of taking water from pools in rivers, as was very often necessary, by means of wells in filter bunds was of much value.

(b) These were small institutions and presented no difficulty.

(c) The principal point was the provision of an uncontaminated source of water-supply and of pias at the larger kitchens. General instructions were issued in consultation with the Civil Surgeon for the guidance of Charge and Circle Officers and of the itinerant Hospital Assistants on kitchen duty.

The arrangements can, I think, be considered sufficient. Outbreaks of cholera occurred several times in large works, but in no case did heavy mortality ensue. Workers in relief camps enjoyed a comparative immunity from cholera, as compared with residents of surrounding villages. On kitchens no outbreaks could be traced to contamination from kitchen food.

Q. 98.—The matter was seen to by the Officers-in-charge and Medical subordinates regularly.

Q. 99.—I should say that the people supplemented their food with wild products less than in any previous year on record. Owing to the phenomenally short rainfall, the outturn of wild products was very poor. Roots "kunds" which Korkus largely used were hardly to be got. These roots, unless carefully prepared, are somewhat poisonons and their absence was probably not a matter for regret.

Q. 100.—In September 1899, it was observed that considerable numbers of persons from Berar (chiefly the Akola and Buldana districts) and from Khandesh were coming into the district. Many of these people appear to have left their homes for Holkar Territory on the strength of some curious, but widespread, rumour that they would be given money and food there gratuitously. Others left their homes with no fixed intent. In November a rough census of foreigners on relief works showed 1,521 Khandeshis and 1,742 Beraris on the relief works open. Later on immigration from Holkar Territory and from Dhar State undoubtedly occurred largely. Attempts to ascertain the numbers of foreigners on kitchen and works were subsequently made, but the results were of little value owing to the untruthful accounts the immigrants gave of themselves for fear of deportation. I am unable to estimate with any degree of accuracy the proportion that immigrants bear to the total number relieved.

Q. 101.—Many indications of the effect of the presence of these foreigners on the mortality of the district were found. In this connection I would beg to invite attention to a printed note drawn up by the Administrative Medical Officer on the vital statistics of the district (No. 4445—84, dated the 9th August 1900). I would note that as greater care in the matter of ascertaining whether the person deceased was a foreigner or not was exercised by the Police from July, the percentage of the total deaths returned by them as being those of foreigners showed a tendency to rise, although, as a matter of fact, both the absolute number of these people and the difficulties which they experienced in this district tended to lessen after that date. Also the months of October and November 1900 were locally most unhealthy owing to the complete cessation of the rains after previous heavy rainfall. That these months should have returned the comparatively low death-rates that they did is, I think, another indication of the extent to which the mortality of the previous months was influenced by the presence of foreigners. Although the pressure of famine had relaxed by October, the relaxation was of recent standing, and the general conditions of the month were most unfavourable to the health of the residents. It is, however, the case that foreigners had largely departed to their homes by October. In October 1900 over 16 per cent. of the deaths were reported by the Police to be those of foreigners and the percentage must have been higher in the earlier months. On the whole I do not think that it would be unsafe to ascribe at least 20 per cent. of the total mortality from December to that of foreigners. The Civil Surgeon would estimate an even higher percentage.

Q. 102.—Orphan waifs were not much in evidence. When deserted children, whose parents or other relatives could not be traced, were found by the Police or the Charge Officers

and when, no co-religionists of the children came forward to take charge of them, the children were sent to the orphanage of the American Methodist Mission under the Revd. Dr. F. R. Felt, at the district head-quarters. That gentleman undertook the charge of these orphans on the understanding that if any relative entitled to the charge of a child applied for it, it would be returned to its relative. Several were so returned: 45 such orphans remain over. This arrangement, while retaining the children in the district and keeping them available for those interested in them if they cared to claim them, ensured for the orphans themselves better housing and care than could have been afforded by a separate Government orphanage at head-quarters unless at a proportionately very large expense. Many of these orphans are foreigners.

Q. 104.—On the whole the district was well served by Railways.

Q. 104 (a).—Weekly returns of rail-borne traffic were furnished by the Traffic Departments. Little import took place otherwise than by rail except to some extent by road from the Harda tahsil to the Harsud tahsil. Statistics are not available of traffic by road. Assuming the consumption per head to be about seven maunds, not much less than half the assumed consumption was imported by rail.

Q. 105.—No.

Q. 106.—(a) Owing to the extreme dryness of the autumn of 1899, the double-cropped area was much less than usual that year. I have reason to believe that in the current year it is considerably in excess of the normal.

(b) There seems to be a tendency to displace food-crops in favour to the more valuable cotton and tilli crops.

Q. 107.—The practice of paying wages in grain appear to prevail only in respect of the juari and wheat harvests. The change to cash wage in respect of cotton, &c., took place some ten years ago. Cash wages do not appear to have been affected by prices.

Q. 108.—Kindly see the answer to question 77 (d).

Q. 109.—One Staff Corps Officer was employed as Famine Works Superintendent and one as Charge Officer. One Native Commissioned Officer was employed as an Officer-in-charge.

Q. 110.—Non-official agency was much used in the special operations for the relief of weavers and for gratuitous relief in towns. It was also used in the supervision of kitchens.

Q. 111.—There were no important changes in the matters mentioned. The grain-basis for wages was altered soon after large works were opened owing to prices easing, but the numbers on works continued to increase.

Q. 112.—It was not observed that the results mentioned were brought about by the massing of people on large works.

KHANDWA :

The 5th January 1901. }

J. WALKER,  
Deputy Commissioner.

*The President.*—How long have you been at Chhindwara ?

A.—For a very long time.

Q.—You remember the famine of 1897.

A.—Yes ; I was Secretary to the Charitable Relief Fund.

Q.—And did you lend any assistance on this occasion also ?

A.—Yes ; I was Secretary to the Municipal Committee and Secretary to the Charitable Relief Fund.

Q.—Which in your opinion was the worse famine ?

A.—The famine of 1899.

Q.—It was in your district worse than the famine of 1897 ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Had you the control of charitable relief in Chhindwara ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you get up a town committee.

A.—Yes, we had a committee.

Q.—Were local subscriptions also raised ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you get a contribution from the Charitable Relief Fund ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you give any help to *parda-nashin* ladies ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How did you go about it ?

A.—We selected a certain number.

Q.—How did you select them ? By what means did you get to know their necessities ?

A.—By going to the localities in which they lived and by enquiring into their circumstances.

Q.—A list was made ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And by common consent you agreed that such and such persons were deserving of assistance ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think there was any attempt to impose upon you ?

A.—No such thing came to my notice.

Q.—Did you administer any relief to special classes, such as weavers ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Are you a *mālguzār* ? Have you any landed property ?

A.—No.

*Mr. Nicholson.*—I think you spent about Rs. 1,32,000 on charitable relief ?

A.—Altogether.

Q.—Of that how much was granted for the relief of weavers ?

A.—About Rs. 12,700.

Q.—Was there any charge for establishment ?

A.—Only Rs. 71.

Q.—Do you consider that the objects to which charitable relief should be more or less confined are those described in the Famine Code ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is there any suggestion that you would like to make ?

A.—Only one suggestion—that a further object be added, namely, to improve the water-supply. Under the present arrangement no assistance can be granted to persons wanting money to clean wells.

Q.—Had you anything to do with any rescue of orphans ?

A.—Of course in the beginning we had about 112 orphans; but they were disposed of, and in the end we had 60 orphans.

Q.—How did you dispose of them ?

A.—We traced out their relatives, and we handed over some to the Missionaries.

Q.—You also gave relief to the weavers, to what extent ?

A.—Well, we spent about Rs. 28,000.

Q.—Were they weavers who had a special class of work ?

A.—No ; makers of ordinary *dhotis* and *saris*.

Q.—Why were these weavers selected ?

A.—Because they would not work on the Government relief works.

Q.—Why not ?

A.—They were not accustomed to hard work.

Q.—Was there any market for their goods ? Had the market for their goods so contracted that they required charitable relief ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In what way did you afford this relief ?

A.—We did not start an elaborate scheme : we simply opened out a market, and we undertook to purchase a certain amount of cloth.



**Answers by Mr. MATHURA PARSHAD, Pleader, Chhindwara, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.**

**Q. 1.**—At the commencement of the rains of 1899 the outlook was not gloomy: 1896-1897 was the famine year and good harvest was of course reaped in 1897-1898, while the crops of 1898-1899 was not so good as that of the preceding year.

**Q. 2.**—Normal cultivated area of kharif crop in the district is 437,736. This figure has been arrived at by taking the average of the figures for 5 years preceding the famine year of 1896-97. The kharif sowings in 1899 covered an area of 488,833 acres, thus 51,097 acres more than the normal kharif cultivated area as determined above.

**Q. 3.**—The average rainfall of this district of the last 31 years during the rainy season, as given in the Revenue Report of 1898-99, is 40·56.

The actual rainfall in the rainy season of 1899-1900 is—

	Inches.
June to August ... ..	10·37
September to November ... ..	1·09
Total ... ..	<u>11·46</u>

The actual rainfall this year (1899-1900) is thus 28 per cent. of the average rainfall of the district.

The rain ceased since the 14th October 1899, on which date the rainfall was only 0·18.

The distribution of rainfall was as under :—

	In 1899-1900.	Average of 31 years.
June ... ..	2·86	9·57
July ... ..	4·42	11·03
August ... ..	3·29	7·62
September ... ..	0·91	9·62

**Q. 4.**—As already stated, the normal kharif cultivated area is 437,736 acres. The average kharif outturn, as determined from the produce of the five years previous to the famine year, 1896-97, was 90 in American notation. The outturn of the kharif crop in 1899-1900 was 30 in American notation. It was thus 33 per cent. of the normal kharif outturn.

**Q. 5.**—The total population of the district is 407,494.

The number of tenants and field-labourers is as under :—

	No.
Tenants ... ..	180,505
Field-labourers ... ..	97,133

The percentage of the number of tenants to the total population of the district is 44·3, and of field-labourers 23·8.

**Q. 6.**—Mere failure of crop was not sufficient to establish the necessity of relief. But proof of necessity was required by compliance with tests. One test relief work was opened under the District Council on the Amarwara-Chaurai Road in the Amarwara Circle, which was most severely distressed at the last famine of 1897. This was followed by another test work at Saoli under the Public Works Department, which was subsequently converted into a regular famine-relief work.

**Q. 7.**—The following observed facts led the authorities to think that the machinery of relief should be set in motion :—

(a) Continued rise in the prices of food-grain.

(b) The very large number of persons who flocked at the test works.

(c) Want of labour in the fields to keep agriculturists and persons of the labouring classes duly engaged.

(d) Observation of actual distress among agriculturists and labourers.

Q. 11.—Following was the order in which relief measures were undertaken :—

1. Opening the Government forests.
2. Organisation of private charity.
3. Test works.
4. Kitchens (ii) elsewhere.

Q. 14.—Irrigation wells can be made in the Chaurai Pargana, which is the chief wheat-producing tract in the whole district.

Q. 15.—Construction of the road from Amarwara to Chaurai was first undertaken. This was one of the recognized roads under the District Council. The work was conducted under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioner.

Q. 23.—Admission to works was not always open to all. I found that certain works were at certain times closed to all new-comers for reasons not made known to the public. Once I made a reference on this point to the Sub-Divisional Officer, but no satisfactory reply was received from him. No distance test of any kind was insisted upon, nor was residence on the works compulsory.

Q. 26.—There was a Civil Officer for each charge. He was generally taken from the ministerial line. His salary was Rs. 100 rising to Rs. 150 per mensem. The local representatives of the Public Works Department, such as Works Agents, &c., were considered subordinate to him, but they were often found on bad terms.

Q. 60.—No. The application of special tests was not considered necessary. They freely took advantage of the ordinary machinery of famine relief.

Q. 61.—Yes. They were controlled by members of the Forest Department. They benefited generally State ryots in Government forests.

Q. 62.—No, not to my knowledge.

Q. 63.—Yes, but this was done at the expense of the Indian Charitable Fund.

Q. 64.—Yes, they did show a reluctance to go on ordinary relief work or to the kitchens, though not physically unfit for ordinary labour.

Q. 65.—Special relief measures were found practicable for weavers only and for no other class of artisans. They were successful in both respects, *i. e.*, (a) relief, (b) economy.

In my opinion in districts in which the population of the weaving class is not very large the work of affording relief to them should be entrusted to the Charitable Fund Committee which can afford adequate relief to needy weavers and also can make use of the cloths manufactured by them by freely distributing them to needy persons in receipt of State relief. In fact, in my district, there was no necessity for the Government to take any action to help the weavers.

Other artisans, such as Pinjaras (spinners) and Sisgois (bangle makers) were also assisted out of the Charitable Fund.

Q. 66.—Grass from Government forests obtained by famine labour was made available at reasonable rates in all centres of agricultural population where scarcity of fodder was felt, and those arrangements were attended with marked success.

Q. 67.—Yes.

Q. 69.—Distribution of cooked food at kitchens. This form of gratuitous relief was chosen because it was considered that only those who were in absolute need of relief would be benefited, whereas in the case of cash doles this was not possible. This form of relief was chosen on economic grounds also.

Q. 70.—Recipients of gratuitous relief were selected by persons with local knowledge. Eating cooked food was one of the tests, but there were other tests as well, such as :—

- (a) Persons who were considered physically fit to work on famine relief works were not admitted.
- (b) Persons not able to work by reason of their old age, bodily infirmity or the like were admitted.
- (c) Children under 12 years of age were generally admitted to kitchen relief.
- (d) Women with babies in their arms were generally admitted to kitchens.

Q. 71.—No poor-houses were opened in this district.

Q. 74.—Kitchens were opened before and after the rains.

Q. 75.—Simple *khichri* with a small quantity of ghee or oil and vegetable was provided and distributed only once at fixed times. As a rule the people were compelled to feed on the premises, but in very few exceptional cases they were allowed to take or send for their own food.

Q. 77.—In the beginning the admission to the kitchen was free, but subsequently it was restricted. The method of selection was as follows so far as the kitchen of Chhindwara, which was in my own charge, was concerned :—

(a) Able-bodied persons physically capable of working on the Famine-relief works were not admitted.

(b) All applicants for gratuitous relief who presented themselves at the kitchen door were thoroughly inspected, and only those who deserved to be fed were admitted. Persons who were in receipt of other forms of relief either under Government or out of Charitable Fund, and those otherwise eligible to any other form of relief, were studiously excluded.

Q. 78. Generally Brahman cooks were employed, or if the number of a certain caste was high enough, one member of their own caste was employed to cook food for them. This was done at Chhindwara in the case of Gonds. In the beginning, *i. e.*, for a few days after the kitchens were opened at Chhindwara, much reluctance was shown to eat cooked food at the kitchen by all classes, even by the lowest class. I may mention the case of an old man belonging to the Chamar class almost dying of starvation in his own house but not going to the kitchen to eat cooked food for fear of being outcasted. But a little exertion soon drove him to the kitchen.

Q. 79. Generally malguzars and other well-to-do tenants of villages and in Municipal towns Secretaries to the Committees were put in charge of kitchens. Circle Officers and Charge Officers exercised supervision and check over them.

Q. 80. Only one cheap grain shop was opened at Chhindwara, chiefly intended for such classes as would not ordinarily take advantage of the recognized form of Government relief. Admission was registered by careful enquiry into the circumstance of each family on the spot. This form of relief was successful, and it cost about a thousand rupees.

Q. 81.—No. The cheap grain shop had a marked tendency to keep down the high prices of food grain artificially raised by local Baniyas.

Q. 87.—The number of persons in receipt of relief has exceeded 15 per cent. of the population affected. The general poverty of the people and the exhaustion of their resources are the two main causes responsible for this state of things.

Q. 88.—I do not think that relief at any stage of famine was either excessive or defective. By enforcing the system of selection, the kitchen relief attracted those persons only who were actually in need of it, whereas persons on relief-works justified their admission by reason of their submitting to the conditions and tests imposed upon them by the Public Works Department. But so much I can say, that there were many persons on famine relief-works who were not entitled to State relief and could afford to maintain themselves and their family during the period of famine. But under the rules they could not be turned out because they submitted to full task test. In this respect only the relief may be called a little bit excessive.

Q. 89.—People in receipt of relief belonged to all classes. They included petty proprietors, State ryots, &c., but I cannot say to what extent.

Q. 90.—Yes. The people were more ready to come on relief than in former famine. I remember that during the famine of 1897 people considered it most derogatory to their position to work as common labourers on famine relief-works. But now I find that they have lost all their self-respect, and I have observed that almost all residents of villages with their family members had gone on relief-works. I will attribute this readiness of the people to come on relief-works, not so much to their poverty as to their belief of asking for Government relief in the famine time. For this reason I recommend that persons to be employed on famine relief-works should be admitted by selection.

Q. 91.—I found that people were most reluctant to exhaust their resources before accepting State relief. This is clear from the fact that as soon as the works were declared open, there was a regular rush of people, and the number soon reached to a limit which rendered the management almost impossible. A great majority of these persons could have easily afforded to live on their own resources for some time at least.

Q. 92.—I would recommend a thorough revision of the Famine Code in the light of experience gained at the past famine.

Q. 93.—In my opinion admission to all forms of Government relief should be made by selection. This is done only in the case of gratuitous relief, but I would extend this system to the admission of persons coming on Public Works Department relief-works.

Q. 95.—High mortality might have been due in certain cases to the unsuitability of food, but not to the insufficiency of food.

Q. 96.—Impure and insufficient water-supply was in my opinion the direct cause of increased mortality. Famine labour was freely employed in this district to improve and to extend the water-supply. Permanganate of potash was used to disinfect wells and other sources of water-supply. In Chhindwara town it was done once in two or three days according to the instructions of the Medical Officers.

Q. 97.—In the Chhindwara kitchen, which was the largest kitchen in the whole district, sufficient care was taken to make good sanitary arrangements. During the great epidemic of cholera which raged most furiously in the Chhindwara town, I introduced the system of using boiled water for drinking purposes. All these arrangements were supervised by medical men.

Q. 102.—Every effort was made to trace out their own relatives, failing which their caste fellows were persuaded to adopt them in their own community as members of their family. Those orphans only whom neither their relatives nor their caste people nor their friends adopted were made over to Missionaries.

Q. 103.—In local areas in which people are found to suffer from scarcity of water certain sums out of Charitable Fund may be granted to private owners of wells which can be conveniently deepened at trifling cost so as to obtain more quantity of water to be made use of by their neighbours.

Q. 105.—Yes.

Q. 106.—The change in the character of crops was observed this year only. The change took the form of (b) substitution of food crops for more valuable crops.

Q. 107.—First part—Yes.

Second part—No.

Third part—Yes.

Q. 109.—Yes. Only one officer was employed in this district as Superintendent of Famine Relief-works. The second part of the question is answered in the negative. Supervising officers might be drawn from the Education as well as the Judicial Department.

Q. 110.—Non-official agency was employed in this district, so far as the management and supervision of Civil kitchens was concerned, and in this respect it was most successful. But in my opinion there is still some scope for its extension, and I would very strongly recommend that during the progress of famine-relief operations a certain number of intelligent non-official gentlemen should be appointed as visitors to relief-camps and kitchens, &c. The adoption of this system will prove most efficacious in checking the abuses and malpractices which official supervision fail to detect. Non-official visitors can be freely approached by persons who have to represent their grievances or make complaints. The non-official visitor will simply visit famine-relief institutions and submit a memorandum of his inspection to the District Officer, embodying therein any new suggestions or recommendations tending towards the improvement of the administration of relief. He will then be in the best position to give evidence on any fact before the Famine Commission, which is generally appointed after the close of famine.

Q. 111.—All or any of the changes enumerated in clauses (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) are in my opinion calculated to produce great effect upon considerably limiting and keeping down the number of persons seeking relief rather than upon the death-rate.

Q. 112.—My experience has shown that the massing of people on large works is to be avoided as far as practicable, as it undoubtedly tends to disorganise family life, &c. I would suggest that small relief-works intended for certain groups of villages should be opened, so that the people can easily come back to their houses after a day's work.

CHHINDWARA:

The 12th January 1901.

MATHURA PRASAD,

Pleader.



MR. F. A. T. PHILLIPS, I.C.S., OFFICIATING COMMISSIONER, NERBUDDA  
DIVISION.

*The President.*—Were you in charge of the Nerbudda Division as Commissioner during the last famine?

A.—Yes; I was in charge from the end of June 1899 (before the famine commenced) till the present time.

Q.—Were you in that division during the 1897 famine?

A.—No, I was not.

Q.—You cannot compare the two famines in that division?

A.—No; I left that division in November 1896.

Q.—During the last famine you exercised a general control over the relief operations in that division?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you keep in your own hands the adjustment of prices and wages?

A.—No, that was left to the Deputy Commissioner in the main.

Q.—Did you see any reason—did you notice any particular occurrence which would lead you to believe that it would be well to retain that power in the hands of the Commissioner alone?

A.—No; I think on the whole the power was very wisely exercised by the Deputy Commissioners.

Q.—Had you any instance in which different wages, different scales, prevailed in the same district on different works?

A.—Yes; in the same district; but not in the same *tahsil*. There were instances in the Hoshangabad district, the tendency at one time was for prices to be higher the further west you went; that is to say, the prices in Sohagpur were lower than the prices in Hoshangabad and the prices in Hoshangabad than the prices in Harda and so on.

Q.—Had that variation of wage in the different parts of the same district, so far as you could see, any effect in taking labour from one work to another?

A.—No; I do not think it did at all.

Q.—The system of administering public works was that called the intermediate system?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You did not permit any other system except that, to be followed in your division?

A.—The task work system was adopted on some works for weakly gangs; and in Nimar for aborigines.

Q.—Were the aborigines employed on the same work as the ordinary labourers?

A.—Yes, in that district.

Q.—Did you find any difficulty in getting them to the work?

A.—No, not in the place to which I refer, namely, the Harsud *tahsil*.

Q.—Did it appear to you that the task that was originally fixed was too easy?

A.—It was in some instances with reference to earthwork.

Q.—I think the task in the Central Provinces in the original Code—was 70 cubic feet of earthwork?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And that was found to be easy?

A.—In places where the earth was soft.

Q.—When that was discovered the task was stiffened?

A.—Yes.

Q.—When was the task stiffened, can you say, generally, in your division?

A.—About the month of November or December 1899.

Q.—With the stiffening of the task to which you refer the wages were lowered under the orders of the Local Government?

A.—Yes.

Q.—So that you had two processes affecting the work; there was first the stiffening of the task and in the second place which had the same effect the lowering of wages?

A.—Yes. That of course affected males in the first class in the digger class.

Q.—The original wage upon which you started was the wage recommended by the 1898 commission?

A.—Yes.

Q.—That wage was considered to be too favourable?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And it was reduced?

A.—It was reduced.

Q.—It has been pointed out in a statement prepared for the Commission by the Superintending Engineer that the percentage of full wages actually earned was in Hoshangabad from 81 to 90 per cent., in Betul from 88 to 98 per cent., in Nimar from 78 to 90 per cent., in Narsinghpur from 98 to 100 per cent. and in Chhindwara from 98 to 100 per cent. Should I be justified in drawing an inference from the fact that the full wage was not earned, that the full wage was unnecessarily high? If people were content to earn a lesser wage than the full wage, and if I infer from the evidence that less than full wage was sufficient to keep them in good condition, does it not follow that the full wage was too high?

A.—I think people were able to save, but there is a difference between a single worker and a family worker. I do not think the wage was too much for a single worker but when families were on the works together they were able to save.

Q.—Were you engaged in the famine administration in 1897 in any part of that division?

A.—No, but I was in the province.

Q.—Well, you know the wage then prescribed was a smaller wage?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think from your experience of the present famine and of the last famine that the wage in operation in 1897 was a sufficient one?

A.—Yes, I think it was.

Q.—You had no test-work in your division?

A.—Yes, in the Chhindwara district.

Q.—Was the test-work the first measure that was taken?

A.—Yes, except the throwing open of Government forests.

Q.—Now from your experience of that, namely, the starting of the test-work before gratuitous relief in Chhindwara district, are you able to come to a conclusion whether test-works should precede gratuitous relief or gratuitous relief test-works?

A.—I think test-works were not necessary.

Q.—Why?

A.—The indications were so marked where there was famine that there was no necessity to provide test-work.

Q.—On the assumption of crop failure you proceeded to the conclusion that famine was to follow? Don't you think that test-works are necessary with a view to ascertaining the class of people who ought to come on relief. Without test-works a certain class will come on relief who need not?

A.—I do not think so. The test-works were undertaken in the Chhindwara district because the famine declared itself so much later there that we felt apprehensive that perhaps relief measures had not been started in time.

Q.—When you instituted the test-work was there a rush?

A.—No, it served to prove that the reports of the Deputy Commissioner were correct.

Q.—And did it serve to prove or to indicate in what parts of the district relief works should be undertaken?

A.—That was indicated rather by the crop failure.

Q.—If in two *tahsil* there had been crop failure and if in *tahsil* A you instituted the test-work and also instituted a test-work in *tahsil* B, if in *tahsil* A the opening of the test-work was not followed by any rush of labourers, you would stop relief in *tahsil* A?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Does it not appear to you that it would be well, as a general rule, to start relief by test-works?

A.—No, I think, where the indications are well marked, they are not required. In the bulk of the Division there could be no question whatever of the reality of the famine.

Q.—Then large relief works were the backbone of your system?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Had you village works as a subsidiary measure of relief?

A.—Yes.

Q.—When did you have recourse to the village works?

A.—In some districts it was earlier and in some later.

Q.—Did you use village works as a reserve for the large relief works?

A.—Yes, there were three large works in the Harda *tahsil* and all filled, and as there was a tendency to overcrowding, village works were at once started in various parts of that *tahsil* to supplement them.

Q.—Could the overcrowding not have been remedied by opening other large works?

A.—There was no room. We were at the end of our resources with respect to large works.

Q.—Can the same degree of economy be maintained in village works in the beginning of a famine as on large relief works?

A.—No; in the beginning I think large relief works would be certainly advisable.

Q.—Subject to your orders I suppose the District Officer was responsible for relief in his district?

A.—Yes.

Q.—He had complete control over all officers including the Public Works Department?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The Public Works Department was independent as regards the mere professional aspect of their works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you approve of that system?

A.—Yes; I think that is the best system.

Q.—Had you any system of inspection of grain supply on the works?

A.—Not any special system. It was part of the duty of the officers in charge to inspect the grain and they were responsible that the grain supply was good.

Q.—The system of gratuitous relief was relief on the works to dependants and relief in the villages by means of kitchens and the distribution of grain or money doles?

A.—Yes.

Q.—We had it in evidence that grain or cash doles and kitchens were in operation at the same time and in the same tract of the country?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You are then able to institute a comparison between the effectiveness and economy of both systems?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Which system do you prefer from the point of view of effectiveness and which from the point of view of economy to the Government?

A.—I think from the point of view of effectiveness kitchen relief is just as good as cash relief; and from the point of view of economy to the Government kitchen relief is better.

Q.—It is your opinion that on the whole the establishment of kitchens is more economical to the Government because it deters certain persons from coming on relief, who might come on relief under the system of grain or cash doles?

A.—It is very difficult to discriminate when grain or cash doles form the only system of gratuitous relief.

Q.—Do you think it possible by associating village agency—non-official agency—with yourself that the system of distribution of grain doles might be as economical as or more economical than kitchens?

A.—Well, I am afraid, you would not get the non-official agency who would exercise the necessary discrimination.

Q.—One native gentleman of importance said if he was distributing the gratuitous relief he would prefer to give grain doles. Are you disposed to think that having regard to economy kitchens would be better?

A.—Yes, I think kitchens would be better.

Q.—But they would not be better for the relief of the more respectable classes?

A.—No. Many people would take cash doles and grain doles, who would not take cooked food.

Q.—That could be settled by a system of selection?

A.—Yes.

Q.—But was it your experience, as time went on, that the disinclination of the people to go to kitchens became less?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did it cause you any surprise the extent to which the people came on to the kitchens?

A.—I must confess I was surprised at the extent to which the people came on in the rainy season.

Q.—Am I correct in thinking that you don't rely very much on the employment of non-official agency during the famine?

A.—They were employed to a large extent in supervising village works and in supervising kitchens.

Q.—Did you employ non-official agency in carrying out the village works?

A.—Yes, to a very considerable extent. I think I may say that most of the village works were placed under the management of the *mālguzār*.

Q.—Advances were made to him. He was told what class of people to employ?

A.—Yes, and also the wages to be paid.

Q.—And then when a certain time elapsed the work was measured up?

A.—Yes, that was done in some parts and in others the work was measured up daily—a sort of *muhaarir* was employed under the *mālguzār* who laid out the tasks.

Q.—Was there any system of partly recoverable advances or did the Government bear all the cost of the village works?

A.—The Government bore all the cost.

Q.—With regard to *takāvi*, you did not go in for a policy of large grants of money from the commencement?

A.—No.

Q.—Do you think, having regard to the possibility of irrigation in your division, that if the famine were to occur again, you would give large advances for irrigation—for the irrigation of the *kharif*?

A.—I would do so if the system of irrigation had been matured and elaborated.

Q.—Is it possible now to fix on the tracts of country where wells can, with advantage, be dug, and to keep a list by you of these places in case of another famine?

A.—I do not think it is possible now to say where irrigation would be successful. I think it is a case for experiment.

Q.—Is there any irrigation in your division?

A.—Very little.

Q.—Your system of *takāvi* is a system of giving advances on the hypothecation of the *rayats*' holding, is it not?

A.—Yes.

Q.—I asked Mr. Standen if he thought that any such system as this might be introduced, namely, selecting 10 or 15 or 20 substantial *rayats* out of a village and making advances to them on their joint and separate responsibility without any regard to the hypothecation of land. He was disposed to think it might work?

A.—I am disposed to agree with him.

Q.—You think it would be a reasonable risk for the Government to run?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is there a large field for the useful expenditure of money for the purchase of seed and cattle ?

A.—Yes, seed has to be purchased every year. I mean it is the custom to buy it at a high rate of interest. The stocks have diminished of late years.

Q.—As regards your policy in connection with the closing of kitchens in the rains I understand that when the rains were well established and the prospect of a good harvest presented itself, you commenced by eliminating individuals from kitchen relief ; and then the time came when you closed the kitchen altogether on a particular day—was that policy generally followed ?

A.—Yes, observation at the same time being made of the extent to which reduction took place voluntarily.

Q.—The people who disappeared spontaneously were agricultural labourers ?

A.—Yes, presumably.

Mr. Nicholson.—Was your division on the whole a division which imported or exported goods ?

A.—It imported.

Q.—To any very large extent ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You have the statistics ?

A.—Statistics of the Railway Traffic.

Q.—Do you receive them from year to year as a matter of course ?

A.—No, they are only supplied to the Deputy Commissioner regularly from week to week in famine time. In ordinary times they are supplied at longer intervals to the Commissioner of Settlement, but not to Deputy Commissioners direct.

Q.—Did you observe any indication or any difficulty in the matter of importing grain ? Were there any complaints that grain was not coming or was being blocked ?

A.—There were one or two complaints. In Betul where the distances perhaps were greater and large tracts were under forest there was some difficulty in getting grain into the outlying parts.

Q.—I am speaking of bringing the grain by railway ?

A.—None whatever.

Q.—Do you think there was an actual shortage of waggons ?

A.—That I am not sure of. I think not in respect to grain. But there was with respect to grass.

Q.—In the matter of immigrants was your division much troubled ?

A.—Two districts were considerably troubled.

Q.—Which were they ?

A.—Hoshangabad and Nimar.

Q.—How did the immigrants come to your notice ?

A.—They came on relief works and were put on separate gangs.

Q.—Did you take any steps to prevent their coming ?

A.—We took steps to deport the families who came from comparatively near ?

Q.—In your division, on the whole, how did the cattle fare ?

A.—On the whole they fared well.

Q.—For grazing cattle you had to pay a fee ?

A.—Yes, quite so.

Q.—Is it a fact that a great number of cattle died in the forests for some reason unknown ?

A.—There was in one district a severe mortality of cattle.

Q.—On the whole the agricultural cattle were not seriously affected ?

A.—There was a large mortality ; but it did not interfere with agricultural operations.

Q.—There is another question. You had a number of orphans on your hands ?

A.—Very few.

Q.—How many were left on your hands ?

A.—Two hundred and fifty at the outside.

Q.—You did not find this number was absorbed ?

A.—There was a residue which was not absorbed, most of those who came to the kitchens were absorbed in the villages as the distress abated.

Mr. Bourdillon.—Did you find much trouble in dealing with the aboriginal tribes ?

A.—No.

Q.—In which districts are they numerous ?

A.—They are very numerous in Betul and fairly numerous in Chhindwara and there are aborigines in other districts.

Q.—Were special arrangements made for them ?

A.—Yes. Special arrangements were made. For the most part the relief of the aborigines was left to the Forest Department.

Q.—And they were relieved by throwing open the forests ?

A.—The Forests were thrown open to the general public.

Q.—For what purpose ?

A.—To gather the edible forest products.

Q.—And feed their cattle ?

A.—Yes, and for the collection of firewood.

Q.—Are you satisfied with the figures of the mortality ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The figures were little above the normal at first. They rose very high during the autumn months?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In Betul they rose very high towards the end?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What is the cause of that?

A.—Partly to cholera. The rise may be attributed entirely to cholera in Chhindwara; but in Betul, while in some measure due to cholera, it is partly due to other causes also.

Q.—It is always fair to expect a rise in the autumn months?

A.—That is true.

Q.—Another witness has said that the opening of kitchens had a bad effect?

A.—I do not think so. I do not think that kitchens can have had any bad effect on the mortality.

Q.—People were fed entirely, I fancy, on Bengal and Burma rice?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Your Division is not a rice-growing Division?

A.—No. Hoshangabad and Narsinghpur are wheat-growing districts.

Q.—We also heard a great deal about the effects of the rains holding off in June and July, and that a great number of people, who then resorted to kitchens, had been driven to do so by terror? Is that your impression?

A.—I do not think so. But certainly the people were disappointed at the delay in the rains. Those who had gone back to their villages had gone back expecting the rains at the usual time, and there was a large interval.

Q.—That had a general effect on the kitchens?

A.—Yes, I think that had an effect.

Q.—When the officers determined to throw open relief to every body, it was hardly anticipated how many would come?

A.—It was certainly a surprise to me.

Q.—The Chief Commissioner came to your division in August and issued orders?

A.—Yes, but I may mention that in that very week, before the orders could be issued, a decline had taken place in Hoshangabad.

Q.—Did you hear many complaints as to labour not being available?

A.—Yes, there were complaints. Many people cried out before they were hurt; but I think in some instances the complaints were justified.

Q.—In the case of labour for weeding the fields?

A.—Yes, that was the case in the Betul district; but I do not think there was much want of labour in any other district.

Q.—Does it not indicate that it was not a wise step to apply the kitchen test?

A.—Looking back I think it was a good thing on the whole. Personally, I must confess, I was inclined to be opposed to it at first, but afterwards I was convinced that it was a wise measure.

Q.—You do not think that any other better experiment could be thought of?

A.—I do not think so.

*The President.*—The various Collectors have told us that roughly speaking the incidence of land revenue is not more than from 4 to 6 per cent. on the gross produce of the land?

A.—I am sorry I cannot say off hand what the incidence is.

Q.—They have stated that in some of the western districts the average produce per acre is worth about Rs. 15 to Rs. 17. In some places it would be higher. One officer said that taking the value of the grain at the harvest rate, the income went as high as Rs. 25, and that the rent of such land was about Re. 1-8-0 to Rs. 2?

A.—I cannot say definitely. But I know that the rent in Narsinghpur is about Re. 1-8-0.

Q.—Taking it at Rs. 2, if it were as high as Rs. 2 of course the land would be good and the produce would be higher than Rs. 16; but taking it at Re. 1-8-0 at the lowest outturn of crops, say Rs. 15, the rent then would be 10 per cent. of the value of the gross produce. Then taking the Government revenue as 60 per cent. of the rent it would represent 6 per cent. of the value of the gross produce. Does that properly represent your view?

A.—Yes, I think so.

Q.—In that case one would expect that the amount taken by the Government would have no effect upon the capacity of the people to withstand seasons of difficulty or distress, and if the people in some districts are now in a depressed condition, that is due to the bad seasons. Do you think it is owing to any other cause than the succession of bad seasons?

A.—No; I do not think so.

Q.—Has the succession of bad seasons caused greater indebtedness?

A.—No doubt most of the cultivators have become more indebted.

Q.—Do you think that in three or four years of good seasons they will be able to recover themselves?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think that process to recovery would be sensibly facilitated by slacking off the already moderate Government demand?

A.—No; I do not think so. I think it would have a tendency to make the people lazy and careless and dependent.



Before I proceed to answer the various questions, it seems advisable that I should make the following prefatory remarks. I venture to think that, if I had time, I could answer fairly fully, for all the districts of my Division, every one of the questions which have been asked. But the time at my disposal is quite insufficient for the answering of them all. I accordingly propose to answer only those which involve an expression of opinion. This course appears to commend itself, apart from any consideration regarding the sufficiency or insufficiency of time at my disposal, because I understand that each Deputy Commissioner has been called on to answer the questions for his own district, and consequently my answer of any question involving a mere statement of fact would be only a repetition of the Deputy Commissioners'. I further propose to make my answers very brief. I understand that I am to be orally examined by the Commission, and I shall be quite prepared to amplify or explain them at the time of my examination.

Q. 24.—In the Central Provinces only one charge was allowed on each large relief-work, and each charge could not relieve more than 5,000, or at most 6,000, persons. This limit was, on the whole, successfully observed throughout the famine. I am of opinion that such a work may well be expected to serve the surrounding country for a radius of 10, or even 15 miles, in the open weather; if the population is not exceedingly dense. The length of the radius would, of course, be affected by the density of population and the degree of distress. In the rainy season people will not travel nearly such long distances to relief-works as they will in the open weather. In the cold weather I came across several persons who had come 20 miles, and even more, from their homes to relief-works in the Betul and Chhindwara Districts.

Q. 29 and 30.—I am of opinion that the classification and wages of labourers laid down by Famine Circular F-41, of 22nd January 1900, were amply justified by experience.

Q. 32.—My experience leads me to agree with the Famine Commission of 1898 that a system of payment by results is unsuited to conditions of acute distress or actual famine

Q. 34.—I am of opinion that the scale of wages adopted was quite adequate. I do not think that it was unduly liberal in the case of a single worker. But it certainly enabled families, consisting of several members, to save upon their earnings. It seems to me, however, that it would be impossible in practice to have one scale of wages for single workers and another for families of workers. The condition of the workers was, on the whole, everywhere good. There was some difficulty about copper coin in places when relief-works were first opened. But after a time it came back fairly freely to the Baniyas on the works.

Q. 35.—A rest-day wage was, as a rule, given. I am inclined to think that this is advisable

Q. 40.—Payment was made to the head of the gang. Speaking generally, I believe that this system led to no difficulty or hardship. It is certainly a convenient system and it has other advantages. I am of opinion, therefore, that it is preferable to the system of payment to the individual.

Q. 59.—I am of opinion that it certainly would not be advisable to rely solely on village works, and to have no large public works. But I think that the latter should certainly be supplemented by the former. Village works should, I think, be extended when there is an unusual rush to the large public works with a view to relieving congestion at the latter. They should also be extended probably as the hot weather advances with a view to bringing people back to the villages by the time when agricultural operations are resumed.

Q. 65.—I believe that all that was necessary was done in the way of special relief to artisans in my Division.

Q. 86.—Speaking generally, I believe that sufficient relief was given by the suspensions of revenue that were granted, and that the relief was not abused. I have been informed that some malguzars realized rents, which under the condition of the suspension of their revenue they ought not to have realized. But I have not been able to learn of any specific instances, and I am inclined to think that they must be very few. Only one specific instance came under my notice in which the relief granted failed to reach the right persons.

Q. 87.—The number of persons in receipt of relief exceeded 15 per cent. of the population affected in several instances. The simple reason is that more than 15 per cent. were really in need of relief. It must be remembered that there has been a succession of bad seasons in the Central Provinces for several years, and the people had not recovered from the famine of 1896-97.

Q. 88.—I believe that gratuitous relief was excessive in a part of the Betul District soon after relief operations were begun. The excess was due to want of discrimination on the part of the Circle Officer. It was soon discovered and set right. Similarly, in the Narsinghpur District gratuitous relief was too liberally granted at first. But here too the defect was soon remedied. I believe that in the rainy season, when admissions to kitchens was unrestricted, here and there persons were relieved at them who were not really in need of relief. But I do not think that the number of such persons was large. These remarks are based partly on observation and partly on the reports of Deputy Commissioners.

Q. 90.—People were, I think, undoubtedly more ready to come to relief than in the famine of 1896-97. The experience of that famine was fresh in their memory.

Q. 91.—Several cultivators, who had a small store of food-grain and also plough-bullocks, went to the relief-works. Herein they seem to have acted very wisely. Otherwise, when the time for resuming agricultural operations arrived, they would have had neither subsistence nor bullocks wherewith to plough, and their fields would have remained uncultivated.

Q. 92.—Yes, as far as any tests can be sufficient.

Q. 105.—At the beginning of the famine there were a very few isolated complaints. But the reasons for these complaints, where they existed, soon disappeared.

I should like to say something in answer to the last five questions. But I doubt whether I could do so just now with sufficient brevity. Possibly I may have an opportunity of saying something at my oral examination.

F. A. T. PHILLIPS,

*Offg. Commissioner,*

*Nerbudda Division.*

HOSHANGABAD:

*The 3rd January 1901.*



MR. H. F. MAYES, I.C.S., DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF BILASPUR.

*The President.*—What is your district?

A.—Bilaspur.

Q.—When did you join it?

A.—On the 30th November 1899.

Q.—Where were you before?

A.—In Balaghát.

Q.—So that you know the two districts?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What is your experience about the two famines?

A.—In Balaghát we had it very bad.

Q.—Are the physical characteristics of Balaghát the same as those of Bilaspur?

A.—Very much the same; both are rice districts.

Q.—Did Balaghát suffer very severely last famine?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did it suffer then more or less, or about equally with Bilaspur in the present famine of 1899?

A.—I think the conditions were the same; the results were different.

Q.—The pressure on the people you think was about the same?

A.—Just the same I should say. It showed more in Balaghát in the last famine.

Q.—Than in Bilaspur in the present one?

A.—Yes.

Q.—When you joined in November 1899, the famine was in full swing?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were there large relief works or small works?

A.—Both almost equally.

Q.—How many large works were there?

A.—At that time there were nine.

Q.—What sort of works were they?

A.—All road works.

Q.—Were they different road works, or were they parts of the same road in some instances?

A.—There were two camps on one road.

Q.—How far were the camps from each other?

A.—At that time, I think, two of them were ten miles apart; generally the works were scattered?

Q.—You had no work within ten miles of another work?

A.—No large work.

Q.—When you went to the district, do you think the Public Works organization was sufficient to control labour on the works?

A.—No, at that time it was not.

Q.—What was the Public Works organization then? You had a District Engineer?

A.—No; an Executive Engineer for the division.

Q.—You mean the whole Chhattisgarh Division?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Under the Executive Engineer what was the organization in the district? Was there any person responsible for the control and organization of the Public Works Department in the district? Was there any one officer who was responsible for the work?

A.—No.

Q.—The Executive Engineer held every thing?

A.—He had under him a Sub-Divisional Officer.

Q.—Had the Sub-Divisional Officer to look after a particular work only?

A.—The district was divided for the Public Works Department purposes and each sub-division had a Sub-Divisional Officer attached to it.

Q.—Was the Sub-Division territorial or was it merely a sub-division according to works?

A.—A sub-division according to works.

Q.—One Sub-Divisional Officer might have under his control several works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The district was not divided into so many territorial sub-divisions; such as tahsils?

A.—No, for Public Works purposes we did not keep to tahsils.

Q.—Who was responsible for the control and administration of a particular work or charge of 5,000 people?

A.—The officer in charge.

Q.—He was supplied to the Public Works Department by you?

A.—Yes.

Q.—He was placed under the Sub-Divisional Officer?

A.—Yes.

Q.—He was entirely under the control of the Sub-Divisional Officer?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In all respects?

A.—I could issue orders to him.

Q.—Could you issue orders to the Sub-Divisional Officer?

A.—No.

Q.—Was it clearly defined that the Sub-Divisional Officer was in any respect independent of the Collector of the district? Could he do anything without your permission?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Could he of his own motion take any action irrespective of you?

A.—In professional matters certainly.

Q.—What was the duty of the officer in charge?

A.—He was in complete charge of the camp.

Q.—In professional charge as well as in administrative charge?

A.—Yes, he was subject to the orders of the Sub-Divisional Officer.

Q.—He could register the admission of coolies on works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—He could exclude coolies from works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Had he any power to alter the wage scale?

A.—No, none.

Q.—He had complete control over admission to the hospital?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did he submit periodical reports?

A.—In his weekly reports he could make note of anything that was important.

Q.—His weekly report comes in the first instance to the Sub-Divisional Officer?

A.—He sent three copies of the report. One came to me, one went to the Sub-Divisional Officer, and I think one went to the Executive Engineer.

Q.—When that paper came to you and you saw any reason to pass any order, how did you issue your orders?

A.—That varied. Sometimes I sent an order to the officer in charge to alter something or other that I found from the report to need alteration; sometimes I used to send orders direct to the charge officer or I could write and make any suggestion to the Executive Engineer.

Q.—It might happen that the Executive Engineer would also issue orders to the officer in charge on precisely the same point?

A.—He might.

Q.—There might then be contradictory orders issued to the officer in charge from you and from the Executive Engineer?

A.—There might; I do not remember any instance of the kind.

Q.—But it was quite possible?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was this officer in charge subordinate to the Civil Surgeon of the district in any way?

A.—In sanitary and medical matters the Civil Surgeon could issue orders to him.

Q.—Direct?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Independently of you?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Independently of the Sub-Divisional Officer?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Then the officer in charge might receive contradictory orders upon the same point from three different independent authorities?

A.—He might.

Q.—You had in the beginning 55,400 people on work, and in the months of May and June your number sprang to 122,000, and in January to 142,000?

A.—These were the total numbers on relief.

Q.—Were Public Works and village works in operation at the same time?

A.—We began to open both as fast as we could.

Q.—When did you commence your village works?

A.—In October, before I came.

Q.—The village works were conducted under your control?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What was your agency for doing village works?

A.—The *mālguzār* or a *bania*, a good tenant or the headman.

Q.—What was the character of village works?

A.—Mostly tanks.

Q.—Is there much scope for tanks in the district?

A.—Very great.

Q.—Was there any local survey or any local allocation of the tanks made on the spot by Government officials?

A.—Yes, invariably.

Q.—From whom did you get that aid?

A.—From one of my charge officers.

Q.—Was he a professional man?

A.—No.

Q.—So that there was no level or survey as to where a particular work was to be located?

A.—None.

Q.—You say that you decided on having particular tanks in a particular village, and that your officer in charge went to the spot and said that he considered it to be a good place?

A.—He asked the people if they considered it a good place, and on the local advice the tank was located.

Q.—Was there any estimate beforehand of the quantity of excavation that was necessary?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was that always submitted to you?

A.—Yes.

Q.—On the basis of these estimates did you make any arrangements with the *mālquzárs* or other headmen of the village to make advances?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was there any agreement that your local people would repay any portion of those advances?

A.—No.

Q.—You did not work on the plan of recoverable advances?

A.—No.

Q.—All these village works were paid for by Government?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What proportion of the cost was advanced in the first instance?

A.—From one-half to two-thirds.

Q.—When advances were made did you have any plan to see whether the work had been done?

A.—Yes.

Q.—There was inspection?

A.—Always.

Q.—On the basis of that inspection further advances were made?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What proportion of men were employed in November on the Public Works and village works—can you say exactly?

A.—Roughly half and half.

Q.—You stated that when you joined the district you found that the Public Works establishment had not been fully organized?

A.—That was so.

Q.—As time went on the organization was improved?

A.—Yes, emphatically.

Q.—Was there between November and March, between the commencement of relief operations and the *rabí*, any time when you were compelled to close your Public Works temporarily owing to want of establishment?

A.—Temporarily we did.

Q.—In order to enable you to collect establishment?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was that a part of your plan?

A.—No.

Q.—What became of those people who had to leave the Public Works? Did they remain at home?

A.—Yes. There was a large number of them.

Q.—If they could not be taken on the Public Works, they did not go on village works, but remained in their own homes?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Doing nothing?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you infer that they were not in urgent need of relief?

A.—A lot of them were. A few people did come on for a short time that were not in urgent need.

Q.—They did not suffer by this stoppage?

A.—No.

Q.—Public Works came into full swing again in February?

A.—Yes, February and March.

Q.—What class of people did you find were on Public Works, and what class of people were on village works? Were more of the better class of people on village works than on Public Works?

A.—About the same.

Q.—Was there any preference expressed by people for village works over Public Works?

A.—They preferred village works. They did their work in comfort.

Q.—Do you think that the task on village works was severer than the task on Public Works?

A.—Very much. Village work was begun as piece-work and a man did as much as he liked. He was paid for what he did.

Q.—Had you a fixed maximum beyond which he could not earn?

A.—No.

Q.—Did that system prevail in any other district except your own?

A.—I do not know.

Q.—So that practically you let people go upon works in their village and work and earn as much as or as little as they liked?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Your code task for soft earth work was 70 cubic feet. Do you know whether that code task was adopted on the Public Works for any length of time? Would you prefer not to speak on that point?

A.—I am not absolutely certain about that.

Q.—How was the task measured on your village works?

A.—We paid according to local custom.

(In the course of conversation it was ascertained that payment worked out to about half as much as on Public Works).

Q.—What class of people then came to the Public Works? If the village works were so popular, how do you account for any people coming to the Public Works?

A.—Because we did not put our village works near the Public Works. We carefully arranged it so that they should not clash with one another.

Q.—Is there large scope for village works in your district?

A.—Very large.

Q.—If you had to deal with famine again would you advocate the policy of village works altogether?

A.—I would.

Q.—Do you think that it would be possible to supply sufficient labour to the population on these village works?

A.—Yes; perfectly possible still.

Q.—For tanks?

A.—There is an extraordinary scope for tanks here.

Q.—When you entered the district did you find gratuitous relief in operation?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What was its character; how was it distributed? By kitchens or grain dole or by cash?

A.—Kitchens and cash dole.

Q.—Did you have kitchens and cash dole in operation side by side during the whole of the famine?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You are able to judge of the efficiency and economy of both systems?

A.—Yes; I can compare the two.

Q.—Which did you find more acceptable to the people?

A.—People prefer cash.

Q.—Is it because they save or because they were able to have their food in their own houses?

A.—They were able to use their money as they liked; for a long time they respected their caste prejudice.

Q.—Did you find that by careful organization and proper establishment the distribution of cash doles can be kept strictly to people who are in need?

A.—I think so.

Q.—You could rely upon the village headman and the respectable people in the village for the selection of persons entitled to gratuitous relief sufficiently to prevent cheating?

A.—Yes, to prevent cheating on any extensive scale.

Q.—Having regard to the maintenance of self-respect of the people you would prefer the system of cash distribution or grain dole to the system of kitchen distribution?

A.—No; I think kitchens are very effective. For the cooked food goes into the mouths of the people.

Q.—If you conduct cash distribution under proper supervision you will find that the people keep good health?

A.—Kitchens would work out much cheaper.

Q.—A native gentleman told us that cash distribution would work out cheaper because kitchens were open to everybody that came for food?

A.—If you open kitchens to everybody.

Q.—Your kitchens were not open to every body?

A.—Not for the whole year.

Q.—Were they for a part of the year?

A.—During the rains.

Q.—In the commencement who were admitted to the kitchens?

A.—Children and any emaciated people who might turn up.

Q.—You had selection ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—When the rains came on that principle of selection was relaxed ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—And every person who came to the kitchen got food ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Would you be disposed to retain that principle of selection during the rains ?  
A.—It would be very difficult to go by selection then.  
Q.—In May in anticipation of the rains you had on your relief list 133,000 people with 17,000 dependants and 86,000 people on gratuitous relief in their villages ? The orders were applicable to your district as they were applicable to the rest of the Province ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Did you, in May, send back a number of people from relief works to their own villages ?  
A.—Yes ; on village works.  
Q.—Did you issue any instructions or orders that the persons, dependants and weakly gangs who went back to their own villages would be brought on gratuitous relief ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—That brought on your list very considerable numbers ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Was the *kharif* area sown in 1899 short or normal ?  
A.—Short.  
Q.—How much short ?  
A.—I have not got the figures.  
Q.—Have you an impression that the shortage is 25 per cent. ?  
A.—Something like that.  
Q.—You assumed that there was little employment, that the *mālguzārs* and substantial tenants had no money to pay as wages ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—You did not proceed on the basis that ordinary conditions would re-establish themselves on the fall of rain ?  
A.—No.  
Q.—You preferred to be on the safe side ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Did it occur to you that it would be possible to be on the safe side if you made advances at that time to the village *mālguzār* ?  
A.—We did make advances.  
Q.—To what extent ?  
A.—Rupees 4,65,000.  
Q.—When was that ?  
A.—At the end of May and beginning of June. Besides Rs. 2,60,000 were given on charitable relief.  
Q.—It was seven lakhs practically ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Would it be reasonable to infer that shortage of cultivation was caused by want of labour ?  
A.—It was more from want of seed.  
Q.—Seed could have been procured if the people had the money ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—That would point to the fact that your advances were inadequate ?  
A.—They were not sufficient ; they were just half of my estimate.  
Q.—In previous famines, Mr. Mayes, it has been found that on the advent of rains it was a safe policy to trust to circumstances re-establishing themselves. It is to the interest of all concerned to sow the fullest area. Did you ever get complaints from the *mālguzārs* or others that your kitchens interfered with the labour market ?  
A.—I do not remember receiving any such complaints.  
Q.—We have it stated before us that such complaints were made in other districts ?  
A.—To the best of my recollection I do not remember receiving such complaints.  
Q.—Did able-bodied persons frequent your kitchens to any substantial extent ?  
A.—In the middle of August we had 142,000 on kitchens out of whom 109,000 were children : that leaves 33,000 as adults.  
Q.—Of whom there must be some women ?  
A.—We had 12,000 men and 21,000 women.  
Q.—Besides those on kitchens you had a considerable number on doles ?  
A.—Yes. A certain number who could not go to kitchens were given doles ; also those who absolutely refused under any circumstances to go to kitchens.  
Q.—Were these the more respectable people ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Is your country a *rabi* country ?  
A.—One tahsil is largely a *rabi* area.  
Q.—Is there well-irrigation there ?  
A.—No. I think the Settlement Officer can give better information on that point.

Q.—Can you push well-irrigation?

A.—No.

Q.—You went in for a liberal policy of suspension of revenue?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was Bilaspur settled in 1892?

A.—Yes, the settlement was completed in 1892.

Q.—What is the cultivated area of the district?

A.—We took the normal cultivated area in 1894-95, which was 1,422,000 acres.

Q.—A part of that fourteen lakhs of acres double-cropped?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What is the incidence of your revenue per acre?

A.—Just under seven annas.

Q.—Rent would be about?

A.—I do not know. The Settlement Officer knows that.

Q.—What crop do you grow?

A.—Practically it is a rice country.

Q.—Have you any sugarcane?

A.—Very little.

Q.—Any cotton?

A.—No.

Q.—What was the accepted yield of rice per acre on an average. How many pounds?

A.—I am not sure of it. The Settlement Officer knows that.

The Settlement Officer referred to said 900 lbs.

Q.—Do you accept that, Mr. Mayes?

A.—Yes.

Q.—That is eleven maunds of rice to an acre?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What was rice sold at at harvest time?

A.—Husked rice 13 to 19 seers.

Q.—Is that 900 lbs. husked rice?

The Settlement Officer: Unhusked rice.

Q.—What is the proportion of husked rice in unhusked rice?

Mr. Mayes: Half.

The Settlement Officer: 7-16.

Q.—There is something to be added for straw?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Straw is not sold?

A.—It is used for cattle.

Q.—If straw was not there they would have to buy?

A.—Yes.

Q.—They did not buy?

A.—There was grass which we supplied to them.

Q.—Even taken twelve rupees as a very moderate estimate of the  
is one-twenty-fourth of the produce of an acre of land?

A.—Yes.

Q.—If you take it at Rs. 10, omitting the cost of straw, it is one-twentieth?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And that is only agricultural produce?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Your people get a good deal from cattle, milk and *ghi*?

A.—Yes; in a very large number of cases.

Q.—The incidence of revenue on the agricultural produce of staple food would be about  
5 per cent.?

A.—Omitting the *rabi* crops.

Q.—Did you make use of non-official agency on village works?

A.—Practically.

Q.—Did you find it worked well?

A.—Yes, I had very few complaints.

Q.—Its assistance was useful?

A.—Very.

Q.—Do you think that this system of famine relief by means of non-official agency might  
be extended?

A.—I am not quite sure whether you can go further than we have done.

Q.—Do you think that village works managed by non-official agency would give adequate  
relief and that you might dispense with public works altogether?

A.—No, you must have a supervising agency on big works.

Q.—Would you advocate the association of non-official agency largely with the official  
agency to control famine?

A.—I would in those small works.

Q.—And in the management of village relief works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You do believe that if proper supervision is exercised there is very little risk of Government losing their money?

A.—Yes, very little risk.

Q.—Did you close your village works also in the rains?

A.—Not entirely; there were some works which we carried on on light soil.

Q.—You did not find it necessary to hut the people?

A.—No. The works were close to their houses.

Q.—You had no distance test?

A.—At first we had.

Q.—You did not compel people to reside on works?

A.—No.

Q.—Had you any system of inspection of grain offered for sale on works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you find bad grain produced for sale?

A.—It was always being produced; the *bania* tries to slip it in, but he was immediately spotted and turned out.

Mr. Nicholson.—Are the tanks you spoke of all irrigation tanks?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Considering the nature of your rainfall and the nature of your soil, are you of opinion that irrigation may be still more largely developed?

A.—Yes, by small tanks.

Q.—Why do you suppose that wells would not be useful under the circumstances?

A.—Because people will not take the trouble of using them.

Q.—I think there was a good deal of forest work?

A.—A certain amount of it.

Q.—When were the reserved forests opened for cattle?

A.—At the beginning.

Q.—Was that without fee, or was that gratuitous?

A.—Gratuitous.

Q.—From the very beginning of the famine your reserved forests were opened free to graze agricultural cattle?

A.—Yes; they were opened for a short time and were then closed to cut fodder and were re-opened as soon as the fodder was cut and we let in cattle again.

Q.—Did you take any special measures to let the people know that the forests were open for grazing their cattle?

A.—Yes, we proclaimed it everywhere.

Q.—You did not take special precautions for water?

A.—No; because people did not send their cattle to the forests. I know of an instance of a man who would not send his cattle to Government forests which were only a few miles away; he said he would not send his cattle there.

Q.—You had a large amount of fodder cut and stacked.

A.—Not much.

Q.—That was in the depôts?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were they near the railway?

A.—Some of them were fairly near, but most of them were far away.

Q.—Were there applications from outside for the grass which you had stacked?

A.—No. I think we sent a list of the rates at which we could supply grass to the Bombay Government; but nothing more was heard.

Q.—What was the rate for delivery at the station?

A.—I cannot say, I think it was Rs. 10 per ton.

Q.—For delivery at the railway station?

A.—Yes.

Q.—There was no demand?

A.—No.

Q.—Could you press the grass?

A.—No, we had no presses.

Q.—It was loose?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you offer the grass to people inside the district before offering it to people outside the district?

A.—Yes.

Q.—At what price?

A.—At about cost price.

Q.—How much was that?

A.—Rupees 4-2-0.

Q.—Did you lower the price if it was not taken?

A.—No.

Q.—How many tons had you stacked?

A.—3,000 tons.

Q.—Has that remained there?

A.—Yes, a great deal of it. We used a lot of it in supplying thatching for public works.

Q.—Why did people refuse to take it ; was it because they had plenty of fodder ?

A.—Yes, there was sufficient for their cattle and also because they had a very poor breed of cattle.

Q.—Would it have been better if *takávi* loans had been given in the beginning ?

A.—Perhaps, I cannot say.

Q.—Would it not have been as useful for fodder as it was for seed ?

A.—I do not think so.

*The President.*—People got *takávi* for seed ?

A.—We gave it very largely for seed.

Q.—Did you find that valuable seed was consumed to any extent in the district ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The class of cattle is valuable there ?

A.—No, they are miserable animals.

Q.—There was no sale of cattle at an unduly low rate ?

A.—No.

Q.—The death-rate of cattle was not due to any want of fodder ?

A.—No.

*Mr. Nicholson.*—Were there any weavers in your district ?

A.—Yes, a few.

Q.—Were their works carried on by Government funds or private funds ?

A.—By Government funds.

Q.—Were they engaged in manufacturing their own special articles ?

A.—At first we actually put them on weaving ; but one charge officer having found that they were willing to do any other work so long as they were able to sit down and work out of the sun, all the charge officers put all the weavers on light work in the relief camps with the exception of the weavers of one place which was far away from the relief camps.

Q.—Were they paid a carrier's wage ?

A.—Yes ; they refused the task to start with.

Q.—That gives four or five pice per unit ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—They were employed at stone breaking ?

A.—Yes, so that they could sit down.

Q.—The result was that a large quantity of metal was on hand ?

A.—Not from them.

Q.—*Pro tanto* there was ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you not think that, considering your experience, it might have been more economical as well as more consistent with the habits of the people if they were kept at the loom, and that their cloth could have been sold for a good price in the ordinary market ?

A.—Yes ; I think that the cloth would have fetched twelve annas in the rupee.

Q.—And Government would stand the loss of four annas in the rupee ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—If large stocks of cloth had been available for distribution, would not that work more economically to Government ?

A.—Yes ; but it should be done under strict supervision.

Q.—You found from actual experience that great supervision is required ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What system did you adopt ?

A.—We gave advances.

Q.—Of yarn ?

A.—Of cash to headmen.

Q.—They are middlemen ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—They advanced it to the weavers ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Cloths were returned ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Where was the particular need of supervision ?

A.—Looking after the managers. That added to the work of the charge officers.

Q.—You had to appoint managers to manage the middlemen ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you have any complaints that the middlemen intercepted a portion of the money that ought to have gone to the weavers ?

A.—I do not think so ; I do not remember.

Q.—Was any special arrangement made for the dependants or non-working children of the weavers who were on special relief ?

A.—Not beyond the fact that they could go to the kitchens if they liked.

Q.—Had you any difficulty in the importation of grain ?

A.—No.

Q.—There was no shortage in any stocks ?

A.—No.



Q.—Did the people make no complaints at all that they could not get their grain from the railway?

A.—No.

Q.—Did you adopt any arrangement by which you could be kept informed of the general character of grain supplied in the district?

A.—No; I had no actual returns, but I used to be always at the stations to inquire what the grain was that came in.

Q.—Had you any immigrants in your district?

A.—Not worth consideration.

Q.—You had a number of children on relief works. Did you find any orphans there?

A.—About 30. They were put in the kitchens in charge of the managers.

Q.—Was American maize tried as seed?

A.—No; we got it from the missionaries and they said distinctly it was no good for seed.

Mr. Bourdillon.—You said that the Public Works Department were not ready at first. Was it after you gave them a month's notice as required or was it after a short notice?

A.—We opened works as fast as we could. We ran twenty-four camps.

Q.—The programme was that a month's notice should be given?

A.—Yes; but no notice could be given.

Q.—Your figures for kitchen relief show a very large number of children?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is it possible to exercise any selection in the admission of children?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You did not find that a large number of well-to-do people sent their children on kitchens?

A.—It is very difficult to say; we admitted a large number and undoubtedly children of the better classes were there.

Q.—You also say that it is very difficult in the rains especially to restrict kitchen relief to adults by the system of selection?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Then if you were to select children for kitchen relief that would be still more difficult?

A.—Yes, it is difficult to eject a child who desires to have cooked food; he must be fed.

Q.—In such cases you have to depend on your subordinates in these establishments?

A.—Yes. It is exceedingly hard to leave selection to them entirely. You will have a well-to-do boy sent as a child to the kitchen.

Q.—But if selection could be managed it would reduce the number?

A.—Oh yes; I should think it would reduce the number very much.

Q.—When you had piece-work in the villages did you feed the dependants?

A.—They could come to the kitchens.

Q.—You found no scruples on the part of old people against coming to the kitchens?

A.—No.

Q.—When you give piece-work it covers everything?

A.—Yes, it covers everything.

Q.—Your mortality seems to have been normal up to May; and then it rose. Is there any reason for that?

A.—Cholera during the rains.

Q.—Mortality rises in rains?

A.—Always.

Q.—Have you anything to suggest about the mortality statistics in any way?

A.—No.

Q.—Did you find any sickness in the kitchens?

A.—No.

Q.—Was rice eaten?

A.—Yes. These people are accustomed to eat rice.



Answers by H. F. MAYES, Esq., I. C. S., Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

Q. 1.—Conditions were normal and the general attitude was one of hopefulness and recovery from the effects of the famine of 1896-97.

The crops of 1897-98 were excellent, and the kharif of 1898-99 was good as a rule. The rabi was much below the average and the area sown was comparatively smaller.

Q. 2.—The kharif sowings were below the normal. About 98·13 per cent. of the normal cultivated kharif area was sown in the khalsa.

In the zamindaris, the kharif area sown was 43·16 per cent. above the last six years' average cultivated area. The normal area is based on the average cultivated area of the six previous years under kharif crops (1893-94 to 1898-99).

Q. 3.—The average rainfall of the district during the rainy season (from June to September) is 49·24 for the last eight years (1891 to 1898).

The actual rainfall of the district in the rainy season of 1899 was 32·82. It represented 66·65 per cent. of the average.

The rains ceased on the 17th September 1899.

The distribution of the rainfall from June to September 1899 (both inclusive) is tabulated below and compared with the average of the previous 32 years :—

Raingauge Station.	June 1899.	July 1899.	August 1899.	September. 1899.	Total.
Bilaspur Central, actual rainfall ...	3·77	7·82	20·74	·92	33·25
Compare average of previous 32 years ...	9·43	14·30	11·29	8·20	43·21

No sufficient rain fell for " biasi " and it was very unevenly distributed. The rice and kodon crops failed.

Q. 4.—Twenty-two per cent. of the normal harvest on a normal cultivated area.

Q. 5.—The percentage of the total population of the district depending exclusively on agriculture (a) as petty cultivators is 4·76, (b) as field-labourers 5·22.

Q. 8.—Village relief at the houses of the people was started in July 1899 in the Pandaria Zamindari and the Lormi taluka and in the distressed parts of the Bilaspur and Janjgir tahsils in October 1899.

Twelve minor village works under District Civil agencies were commenced in the Janjgir tahsil and one in the Bilaspur tahsil in the middle of October 1899.

Preliminary lists of village-relief recipients were prepared and cash doles given.

The tests applied in the case of the village works were as follow :—

Only the needy labourers and the poor tenants of the village were employed by the malguzars.

The approximate number of workers was not to exceed 300 without the special permission of the Charge Officer or Deputy Commissioner.

The rate of wage fixed was from 6 to 8 *daungs* a rupee, equivalent to 420 to 560 cubic feet of earthwork respectively, the ordinary rate being 6 *daungs*, or 420 cubic feet per rupee.

An agreement containing the above-mentioned conditions was executed by each and every malguzar who carried on a village work.

Q. 11.—The order of opening was :—

- (1) Test-works.
- (2) Kitchens both on works and elsewhere.
- (3) Opening of forests.
- (4) Organisation of private charity.

This form of relief was in connection with the Charitable Relief Fund.

- (5) Poor-house.

Q. 12.—At first the 16 permanent Revenue Inspectors were sent to their circles to supervise the preparation of the preliminary lists of village relief recipients and watch and report on the general condition of the crop and the people in July 1899. Thirty-three Additional Circle Officers were appointed later on in August and September 1899.

Four Assistant Settlement Officers, one Extra-Assistant Commissioner and one Assistant Commissioner were deputed to watch and report on the situation in their respective charges of the district, and to arrange for village relief, village works, &c., in August to September 1899.

In October 1899, when the imminence of famine could no longer be doubted, the district was divided into 14 and finally into 16 charges and 49 to 76 circles for purposes of famine administration. Sixteen Charge Officers, 76 Circle Officers and 16 Tank Officers (or Assistant Charge Officers) were appointed to supervise local village works and to generally assist Charge Officers. These officers were not appointed all at once, but from time to time, as their services were required, and the relief operations were extended to the various tracts of the district.

These agencies were utilized in supervising and distributing (a) village relief doles, (b) stimulating the local employment of labour, arranging for inspecting and measuring village works and supervising kitchens and other forms of relief in the interior.

The Forest Divisional Officer and Range Officers, Lormi and Sonakhan, were in charge of grass-cutting works and forest village works and village relief in Government forests.

These officers were also employed in distributing takavi loans, charitable relief grants for seed-grain and bullocks, clothes and American maize.

The services of an Extra-Assistant Commissioner were utilized in distributing town relief cash doles.

The members of the Municipal Committee were employed in preparing preliminary lists of paupers and *parda-nashin* women in the several wards of the town of Bilaspur.

The Munsiff of Bilaspur tahsil supervised and regulated the weaver relief in the town of Bilaspur. The mukaddams and leading members of the village community acted as panches in charge of civil kitchens and assisted the patwaris in the preparation of the lists of village relief and helped the Charge and Circle Officers in distributing cash doles.

Q. 13.—No loans were issued at the outset.

Q. 15.—Village works were first undertaken, that is, construction of tanks and bandhias (embankments). They were ordinary works under direct supervision of the Civil authorities, i. e., one was under a Civil Charge Officer, assisted by a local muharir and 12 were carried on by intelligent malguzars, assisted by the patwaris and local muharirs and supervised by the Charge and the Tank Officers.

Three more tanks were constructed at the district head-quarters.

Q. 19.—Large public works were started in November 1899, about a fortnight after the village works.

Q. 21.—The works were divided into charges.

The charge provided for the maximum number of 6,000 workers. The maximum number was exceeded in several instances.

Additional camps or charges were opened to relieve the pressure. A sufficient staff was appointed to exact a full task and the camps were speedily cleared of a large number who used to come only to work for half a day and earn enough to buy tobacco and other luxuries.

Q. 32.—My experience has confirmed my opinion that if started in time, adequate relief can be afforded in cases of severe famine by works based on a system of payments by results, for all persons coming on those works in good condition. All my village works were piece-work, pure and simple, and though the day-unit payments were less than those on Public Works Department camps, the works kept extraordinarily fit.

Q. 34.—My own opinion was and is that the scale of wages at first adopted was unduly liberal, and my experience was that the reduction of 25 per cent. subsequently ordered was entirely justified. My reason for saying this is that, on making enquiries at the different camps, I found that families were saving money hand-over-fist. A number of people were attracted who had no claim whatever to relief, and subsequent reduction of the wage and stiffening of the task speedily brought about their disappearance.

Copper coin circulated freely between the paying officials, the people and the Banias.

Q. 46.—The prices scale for the calculation of wages was fixed by the Deputy Commissioner, with the sanction of the Commissioner of the Division.

It was based on rice, the staple food of the district: small variations in prices were omitted to avoid constant changes.

Q. 52.—The small village works played an equal part with Public Works Department large works in the scheme of relief, and this form of relief was by far the most satisfactory in this district. The works are of undoubted utility, and a full tale of work was exacted for the money paid. Wages were fixed so that a man had to do a full day's work to get a living wage, while at the same time he could get home when he liked. He chose his own time to work (a great consideration in the hot weather). In spite of a much higher task, the workers on the village tanks were in better condition than those on the Public Works Department camps by the end of the hot weather.

Above all practically no staff was required and therefore no itching palms to be soothed.

Q. 53.—Small village works included construction of new tanks, embankments, sluices and deepening and improving old tanks, bandhias, &c.

Q. 54.—Two tank-works (the Dhanras tank and the Ratanpur tank) were conducted under the supervision of the Public Works Department.

Four village works were carried on under the direct supervision of the Civil agency, and eight tanks were deepened to provide against future water famine in the Government forests, under the direct supervision of the Forest Department, and 663 tank-works were done by the malguzars under the supervision of the Civil famine officials.

Q. 55.—The following arrangements were made :—

(a) For laying down the work—

The Charge Officer selected the site, in consultation with the malguzar and the leading inhabitants of the village in case of a new tank and prepared a rough estimate of its cost and then the work was started with an advance given to the malguzar.

(b) For measuring it up—

The Charge Officer, or his assistant, the Tank Officer, used to measure the work periodically and regularly, and when the first advance had been spent, a second instalment was given, and so on till the work was completed, when it was finally measured up, the accounts adjusted and a final certificate given.

(c) For paying wages—

The workers were paid daily for the work done on the *danqui* system, referred to in answer to Question No. 8. The malguzars used to keep rough accounts of the work done, amount paid, and the number of workers employed. This was examined from time to time by the Charge and Tank Officers, and signed by them in token of having been checked and found correct. Enquiries were also made by these officers in the matter of any complaints made by the workers, and the malguzar was the man who suffered, if the work was not satisfactorily done, or regular and proper payments were not made, as he got paid for work actually done, while any amount found unspent was refunded into the treasury.

The malguzars were solely responsible for these village works administratively and financially, and the Charge and Tank Officers were responsible for general supervision and proper payment for the amount of work done and for the satisfactory completion of the work and the final adjustment of the account.

Q. 58.—These village works were carried out at some distance from the Public Works Department relief-works, and they seldom clashed with the latter. In one or two instances, the wages allowed at the Public Works Department relief-works were more remunerative than those at the smaller adjacent village works.

This caused some rush of the workers from the latter. But the fact was promptly brought to the notice of the Public Works Department authorities, who took steps to exact sufficient work at their camps and this put a stop to the rush.

Q. 59.—See answer to Question No. 52.

The village works were done at an average rate of 420 cubic feet, or 6 *danquis* per rupee, a rate which could hardly be obtained in any Public Works Department camp. Although 685 tanks have been built, there is still room for more, and in the next famine I would most strongly recommend village tank-works being made the backbone of relief; the Public Works Department being confined to the large tank projects, of which a number will be available. The water-supply of the district will be materially improved, while its revenue-paying capacity will be, to a certain extent, increased.

Q. 60.—According to the census of 1891, the number of forest and hill tribes in the district is 207,717. No special tests were applied to them. Relief when necessary had to be taken to them near their homes. Cash doles were distributed through the Forest Range Officers and the Charge Officers.

Baskets made by the hill tribes were paid for by one Charge Officer and the baskets were supplied to the Public Works Department relief camps.

Rupees 2,993 were distributed from the Charitable Relief Grant to the forest villagers for purchase of seed-grain and cattle. The Government forests were thrown open to the people for the free extraction of head-loads of fuel, grass, fencing materials and all edible products. Certain small areas only were reserved.

The following estimate of the loss to the Forest Department has been given by the Forest Divisional Officer :—

			Rs.
Fuel	...	...	705
Grazing and grass	...	...	666
Edible products	...	...	2,431
	Total	...	<u>3,802</u>

In addition Rs. 1,118 land revenue was suspended in the forest villages. The measures taken were so far very successful and the relief adequate.

Q. 61.—Forest and fodder works were opened. The forest people were employed on the eight forest tank-works and on the grass-cutting operations in the Government forests: 4,198 persons were employed daily for about five months.

These works were under the control of the Range Officers and the Forest Divisional Officer. The works served the forest people of all classes (men, women and children) living in the Government forests of the district.

Q. 62.—Kitchen inmates were employed in weeding the fields of the poorer tenants for about eight weeks in the months of July to September 1900, in a few charges of the district, under the control of the kitchen muharirs and village panch and under the direction of the Charge Officers.

But though B lists of able-bodied persons were prepared, this form of relief was not considered necessary in the district.

Q. 63.—Special measures were taken at first for the relief of weavers in the district.

Q. 64.—They did at first, but one Charge Officer was successful in transferring the weavers in his charge to the Public Works Department camps.

Thereupon the other Charge Officers were asked to try the experiment and they succeeded. It was arranged to keep the weavers in one gang and to put them to stone-breaking only with a reduced task at first. The Charge Officers and the Officers-in-charge of Public Works Department relief camps were asked to see this done personally. The plan was successful where there was a camp within easy reach of their homes.

With the exception of the Koshtas manufacturing finer cloths, the weavers were not physically unfit for ordinary work. So long as they could sit still, they were all right; they could not, however, carry about heavy loads.

Q. 65.—Weaver relief was successful from point of view of (a) relief, and (b) economy. I do not consider that more might have been done in this respect either under direct control or with official assistance.

Q. 66.—The Government and zamindari forests were opened to free grazing. But the people living in the plains are averse to sending their cattle to the forests, nor do they attempt to stall-feed their animals.

Fodder was cut and stored for sale at 61 Government forest nakas and in the Kenda and Korba zamindaris. A few well-to-do cultivators purchased grass, but most of them let their cattle take care of themselves on the village wastes. Subsequently the people were allowed to take away grass free of cost, when there was no hope of sale, but there was little or no demand.

Kutchra wells were dug and springs in river-beds were deepened for procuring water for cattle and men to drink. Eight forest tanks were deepened.

The Maniari and the Jonk valleys in the Lormi and the Sonakhan ranges were notified as suitable grazing grounds, as the two streams have water almost everywhere in the hot weather.

During the hot weather the mortality was not serious, but it rose rapidly at the commencement of the rains, as the cattle were overworked and fed on the rank vegetation which rapidly springs upon the advent of the monsoon.

Q. 67.—No.

Q. 68.—(a) On large public works the dependants were relieved as follows :—

(1) for babies-in-arms one pice each was allowed.

(2) Non-working children and old and cripples were fed with cooked food at the kitchens.

(b) On village works the dependants were fed at the kitchens.

Q. 69.—Relief at kitchens was most employed in the district, as this form of relief was most economical and could be managed without much inconvenience, and it was the means of testing real necessity for relief.

Q. 70.—The distribution of village relief did not go beyond the classes mentioned in paragraph 141 of the Report of the Famine Commission of 1880, except that kotwars and their dependants were relieved under this head under Secretariat letter No. F-343, dated the 16th October 1899.

Q. 71.—Only one poor-house was opened at Sadar on the 30th July 1900.

Infirmis, cripples, orphans, pauper patients and starving vagrants brought by the Police were kept in the poor-house.

The numbers were never large.

Q. 73.—Yes.

Q. 74.—No kitchens were opened before the rains broke in 1899 : 350 kitchens were opened before and 369 after the rains broke in 1900.

A kitchen was expected to serve a radius of five miles in the hot weather, and one and a half to two miles in the rains.

Q. 75.—The ration was fixed in accordance with the famine circular. Meals were distributed twice a day in some kitchens, and once a day at others. The people were compelled to take their food at the premises, but were allowed to take away what remained uneaten.

Q. 76.—A radius of three miles was fixed and every precaution was taken to see that Civil kitchens did not clash with those on Public Works Department works.

Q. 77.—Admission to kitchens was restricted to children, infirmis and cripples and emaciated paupers till the rains broke. In the rains, the kitchens were free to those who sought and who could get no labour.

Q. 74. The poor-house ration was in accordance with the famine circular and consisted of rice and dal ; it varied on occasion to meet the case of sickness or weakness.

Q. 75. The mukaddam and the patwari prepared the preliminary lists. They were checked every month by the Circle and the Charge Officers who also inspected the recipients.

Q. 76.—Payment was made in cash monthly at the homes of the recipients.

Q. 77.—Gratuitous village relief was also given to the kotwar's dependants and in some cases to the kotwar himself, so long as he could not get his remuneration or dues from the people and the famine was severe, to enable him to remain at his post instead of leaving the village in search of employment.

Q. 78.—The cooks employed were of the following castes: Brahmins, Raots, Kewats, Marars, Dhimars, Gonds, &c. Reluctance to take cooked food was shown by the higher classes—Brahmins, Chhatris, Banias, &c., all through, and by the lower classes too in the beginning when distress was not acute, but in the hot and rainy seasons, when distress was severe, the lower classes came to the kitchens in shoals without any caste prejudices.

Q. 79.—The malguzars, mukaddams and other well-to-do tenants were generally in charge of kitchens, assisted by the patwari and a muharir where necessary.

In places where there was a police-post or a school, the police muharir or the schoolmaster was in charge.

The village panch and Circle and Charge Officers supervised the kitchens, and the last two checked the accounts, registers, &c., from time to time, on their tours of inspection.

The police kitchens were under the supervision of the Police officers.

Q. 82.—Out of the total demand of Rs. 7,02,627 on account of the two kists of 1898-99, Rs. 38,401 have been suspended and Rs. 58,352 remitted.

Out of the total demand of Rs. 6,70,043 on account of the two kists in 1899-1900, Rs. 5,58,914 were suspended.

Q. 83.—The suspensions were based upon crop failure solely.

Q. 84.—Suspensions were sanctioned on 10th March 1900, a few days after the 1st kist fell due.

In the case of estates in which part of the revenue only was suspended, it was found easy to decide what villages required this assistance.

Q. 86.—I found several instances in which malguzars had collected rents in spite of the orders of suspension. They were compelled to disgorge at once.

Q. 87.—The number of persons in receipt of relief exceeded 15 per cent. during the period from 30th December 1899 to 25th August 1900.

The reason of this excess was that there were no agricultural operations of sufficient importance during the period from January till middle of June in progress to induce the workers to leave their works. The monsoon set in late in June 1900 and the numbers began to fall off gradually from then. In the rains the number of kitchen inmates largely increased till there was sufficient work in the fields.

Q. 89.—The labouring classes naturally formed the major portion of those on relief; no figures exist to show how many landholders came on the works, but judging by the big rush back to the villages when takavi was being distributed in May and June, practically all the small tenants had part of their families at least on relief-works. I also found a number of small malguzars working as mates.

Q. 98.—Yes. In some cases inferior rice was found and was ordered to be destroyed.

Q. 99.—The people who could not get a full meal used to pick up the leaves of the plants and trees and wild berries, &c., and make porridge and feed on it.

Q. 102.—The orphans were dealt with according to the instructions laid down in Secretariat letter No. F-1546, dated the 21st August 1897; there were only 13 orphans in the poor-house who were made over to the local mission.

Q. 104.—The only case I came across was one in which the dealers took advantage of a special rate from Bengal to Bilaspur to re-ship seed back two stations and sell as locally grown. This was stopped by the Railway Company lowering rates to intermediate stations as well.



Q. 106.—Yes; the change has taken the form of increased sowing of kodon instead of rice, and the substitution of oil-seeds for wheat, gram, teora, &c.

Q. 109.—No officers of the Native Army were employed in minor posts in the district.

Non-Commissioned Officers were employed as Officers-in-charge of Public Works Department relief works.

Q. 110.—The numerous Missionaries in the district volunteered their services and proved of the utmost use in managing kitchens, village works and in distributing cash doles.

The 650 odd Civil works were practically all ~~managed by malguzars~~; one malguzar proved an efficient Charge Officer, and two others were employed as Officers-in-charge of Public Works Department camps.

H. F. MAYES,

BILASPUR :

*The 4th January 1901.* }



*The President.*—When did you join the district?

A.—In December 1896.

Q.—What was the last settlement?

A.—From 1888 to 1892.

Q.—What was the term of settlement?

A.—10 to 11 years.

Q.—There is a re-settlement going on now?

A.—Yes. I have been on and off in the district from 1896.

Q.—You were in the district in 1897?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think that the pressure was very nearly equal in both famines?

A.—It showed itself more than in 1897. In 1899-1900 the crops were much worse than in 1896-97. I should say that the pressure was severer this famine, apart from the administration of relief.

Q.—Bilaspur is mostly a rice country?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was there a 4-anna crop in 1899?

A.—Nothing like it.

Q.—Had you a good *rabi* or any sort of *rabi*?

A.—It was a poor *rabi*.

Q.—Was it a 6-annas *rabi* on the normal?

A.—I should say about 4 annas or 5 annas on the normal area.

Q.—You had a total failure of the *kharif* on the normal area?

A.—Yes.

Q.—So you had a complete failure of the *kharif* and you had a most indifferent *rabi* and at the highest time you had on relief 24 per cent. of the population. So that your people must be fairly well-to-do?

A.—No, they are not.

Q.—How is it then that for a short time only 24 per cent. of the population came on to relief. They must have some means of resistance?

A.—The people are small, but they are prosperous in themselves.

Q.—That is what I mean. They must have laid by something?

A.—Yes, a good deal had been laid by by *mālguzārs* and their tenants, but that has disappeared since 1894-95. There have been rather bad years since then.

Q.—How far have you gone with the revision of the settlement?

A.—I have attested one tahsíl.

Q.—Have you made any investigations regarding other tahsíls?

A.—In the first famine.

Q.—We have been told that, speaking roughly, the incidence of land revenue on a normal cultivated acreage in a normal year is about 5 per cent. of the gross produce?

A.—Not so much.

Q.—In a normal year what would be the normal incidence?

A.—The incidence of rent on the gross produce is 6·5 per cent.

Q.—According to the last assessment?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What proportion is taken as revenue?

A.—Fifty-five per cent. of the rental.

Q.—So that your incidence of revenue is under 4 per cent.?

A.—Yes, about 3½ per cent. in the one tahsíl.

Q.—Would it be more or less in other tahsíls?

A.—A trifle more.

Q.—Would it be 4 per cent. in other tahsíls?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is it your opinion that the incidence of land revenue of the district was any substantial factor in disabling people from resisting famine?

A.—It is not worth taking into account.

Q.—It may be neglected?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Are the *mālguzārs* of the district in debt?

A.—It is hard to fix a standard with which to make a comparison. As a class they are indebted.

Q.—Is much of the district uncultivated, and capable of cultivation?

A.—I suppose in the tahsíl I have attested about 80 per cent. is culturable.

Q.—And what is the case in other tracts?

A.—About 60 to 70 per cent.

Q.—Would you say that practically the whole of the culturable area of the district is occupied?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You don't anticipate any increase of revenue from an extension of the culturable area?

A.—There is very little room for extension.

Q.—So that the *mālguzārs* of the district for their increase of income have to look to intensity of cultivation rather than to extension?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you take any active part in relief works?

A.—I had four charges.

Q.—As far as works were concerned, was relief administration by village works or by public works in your charge?

A.—I had four public works charges, but the bulk of the workers were on village works on my side.

Q.—Then as regards public works and the method and system of working?

A.—I do not know very much about public works.

Q.—You would prefer not to be examined on the point?

A.—Yes.

Q.—As regards village works, you heard Mr. Mayes' evidence. Did you follow the same system and do you agree with his appreciation of it?

A.—Yes, absolutely.

Q.—The system was the location of work on the spot at a conference between officials and local men?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The execution by the local men of a certain portion of the work, then the measuring up of the works?

A.—There are one or two minor points which I did not approve, but I do approve generally the system just described.

Q.—Well now, what was your experience regarding the effectiveness of the test on village and on public works. Were the people required to do a heavier task on village or on public works?

A.—On village works our task was about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times as heavy as the task on public works. Our lead was longer and the lift very much higher.

Q.—I understood from Mr. Mayes that there was no limitation to the amount that a person could earn on your works. He was not restricted to do a certain portion (say 70 cubic feet or more). He would be paid by the result?

A.—Yes, I once or twice had to make a restriction which was with a view to preventing people from working all night as well as all day.

Q.—They wanted to do that?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were people allowed to do as much as they pleased?

A.—They could earn as much as was necessary for famine relief purposes.

Q.—Did you not aim at allowing only the living wage?

A.—We arranged so that each individual should earn a little less than on public works.

Q.—Did you succeed?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How did you correct the tendency to over-earning?

A.—We had a *khatauni* on each work by which you could see at a glance the amount of the day's or week's work and earnings of each individual.

Q.—A *khatauni* is an abstract of work done?

A.—Yes.

Q.—So that if it were increasing to a dangerous extent it could be checked?

A.—Yes. I raised the amount of work for the rupee.

Q.—But notwithstanding that, people preferred to do village works which were near their houses rather than go to public works?

A.—I am not quite sure that *chamārs* did.

Q.—We had it somewhere that people went from village to public works. What was your experience?

A.—It is rather hard to say what happened generally. When public works were first opened and rather disorganized people preferred them.

Q.—For the time; because tasks could not be enforced I suppose?

A.—Yes.

Q.—When that was rectified did the people prefer village works?

A.—The tenants did as a class, especially those who were rather more self-respecting.

Q.—The experience in Northern India was that village works were useful for employing the more respectable and self-respecting members of the village community and that this work was reserved for them, while the lower castes and the labouring population were allowed to go to public works. Was there anything like that in your experience?

A.—That is naturally the tendency of the people themselves.

Q.—And did it work out in that way?

A.—To some extent, allowing for other factors: that was the general tendency.

Q.—Was it the tendency to reserve the works in the villages for the more respectable and more substantial members of the village community who do not ordinarily work?

A.—They were not reserved, but the effect on the whole was the reservation (not by any order), of village works near their homes for respectable people, public works being taken up by others.

Q.—Payment was by piece-work, there was no minimum wage ?  
A.—No.  
Q.—Had you anything to do with the distribution of doles and kitchen relief?  
A.—As an inspecting officer.  
Q.—Did you establish kitchens and supervise the distribution of doles in the villages in your charge ?  
A.—I started one or two but did not do anything more. I had my settlement work to do at the same time.  
Q.—Did you have the system of doles and distribution of grain working side by side with kitchens ?  
A.—Yes, in the same village.  
Q.—In the beginning was there a disinclination on the part of the people to come to kitchens ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Did that disinclination become weakened or disappear as time went on ?  
A.—It did not disappear in Mungeli, where distress was not so severe as in the rest of the district.  
Q.—Did you form the opinion that the distribution of gratuitous relief in the kitchens was more or less than the necessities of the case actually demanded ?  
A.—I should say it was not more before the rains.  
Q.—In the rains did it become more ?  
A.—It had a tendency to become more.  
Q.—In regard to the distribution of cash or grain doles do you think the village community or headmen can be trusted to act properly ?  
A.—I would not trust the village people in the slightest.  
Q.—They would be disposed, do you think, to bring on to the list people who were not in any need ?  
A.—Yes, I have often cut off from relief relations of *mālguzārs*.  
Q.—People would prefer the distribution of cash to grain ?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—Do you think that the system had a tendency to become profuse ? Do you think that with a sufficient establishment the profusion could be checked ?  
A.—Yes, we checked the kitchens all right.  
Q.—I am talking of gratuitous relief ?  
A.—Yes, we kept it under with proper supervision.  
Q.—And prevented it from becoming unnecessarily profuse ?  
A.—Yes, under Government supervision.  
Q.—Were there more children than grown-up people at kitchens ?  
A.—Very many more.  
Q.—Did you notice at any time a disposition to send to kitchens the children of respectable people who could get on without assistance ?  
A.—A few.  
Q.—Did able-bodied labourers come to kitchens ?  
A.—We had very few. In Mungeli even fewer than in the rest of the district ?  
Q.—In Mungeli has the usual area of *khariḥ* been sown ?  
A.—No.  
Q.—Is there a large shortage ?  
A.—I think 550,000 acres for rice as against 750,000 in 1898, but the *kodon* area has risen.  
Q.—*Kodon* is less precarious than rice, is it not ?  
A.—In a dry season it is better and in a wet season worse. It is a much cheaper grain.  
Q.—Is the gross area covered by *kodon* and rice pretty much up to the average ?  
A.—Not nearly.  
Q.—What is the shortage due to ?  
A.—Want of money for seed and want of cattle, and to the people having wandered away to a slight extent.  
Q.—There was sufficient labour in the district—was there not—to sow the full area if it had been employed ?  
A.—Yes, in the case of the poorer people the cause of shortage was want of seed.  
Q.—Was there much mortality of plough cattle ?  
A.—Very little more than the normal.  
Q.—You would not say that the absence of plough cattle had anything to do with it ?  
A.—No, many people habitually do without cattle of their own.  
Q.—So shall I be right in the view that the sole cause of shortage was the want of seed ?  
A.—I should think that is by far the most important cause.  
Q.—Could that have been supplied by *takavi* advances ?  
A.—A great many people would have eaten the seed.  
Q.—That is an assumption, is it not ?  
A.—No, I think not. In Tarenga they did eat the seed very largely. I distributed *takavi* in 1896-97 and met many instances in which the people ate the seed.  
Q.—Did you ever hear complaints by cultivators of the want of labour owing to labourers being at kitchens and not ready to take employment ?  
A.—No.

Q.—Did you have any reason to suppose that that was the cause of the shortage in the cultivated area ?

A.—I heard complaints of it in 1897 ; not in this year.

Q.—Mr. Mayes said he was of opinion that if he had to do this business over again he could provide employment for the whole of your district on village works. What is your opinion ?

A.—It might easily, I think, be done in Bilaspur.

Q.—And these works would be of great utility afterwards ?

A.—They would be of great practical utility.

Q.—And would you be disposed in the circumstances of your district to recommend in the future that village works should be located and measured on the spot and such preparations, as can be made, made ?

A.—I think it is unnecessary to make any preparations.

Q.—Would it not be better in laying out a tank, for instance, to have the site of the tank properly laid out beforehand and levels taken ?

A.—I think that the people themselves would do it better than anybody except a first rate Engineer. A subordinate could not do it nearly as well as the people could.

Q.—Would you advise that in the future such works should be located on the spot in the whole of the district ?

A.—No, because in 1896-97 I listed a large number of works and found the list was of no use. It was customary to note all possible works in the village note-books.

Q.—Would it not be as well to have it in your village note-book that such and such a work is considered suitable. It may be that an officer will be there at the time who knows nothing of the circumstances of the case ?

A.—Anybody could tell him.

Q.—Would it not be as well to have a record of accumulated experience rather than to trust to a new man ? However, you think in your district you could find sufficient employment on village works ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think it is possible, having regard to the conditions of these village works, to get *mālguzárs* to contribute anything of the cost ?

A.—They might do so later on.

Q.—Are they heavily hit ?

A.—Yes. I advanced them *takāvi* in 1896-97.

Q.—And it is not yet paid up ?

A.—Not by any means.

Q.—Are these works that you constructed of public benefit, communal works to which everybody has a free claim ?

A.—Old tanks repaired are often owned by *mālguzárs*.

Q.—Does the *mālguzār* charge anything for irrigation from them ?

A.—He is thought very low if he does so ; few do.

Q.—Would it not be fair where Government advanced any portion of the cost, that the condition should be imposed that the work should be free for the irrigation of the village ?

A.—In the case of a new work or an old work ?

Q.—Either ?

A.—There may be some existing rights.

Q.—Suppose the surrender of existing rights was required ?

A.—There are many tanks which belong to old families, and strong religious questions would be involved in giving them up.

Q.—I see. Every case would have to be dealt with on its own merits ?

A.—Yes.

Mr. Nicholson.—There was a considerable loss of cattle during the famine ?

A.—People sold many for their hides.

Q.—Tilling or worn-out cattle ?

A.—As a rule the poorer cattle. All the cattle in Bilaspur are miserable animals.

Q.—Do you think people sold tilling cattle for their hides ?

A.—The *chamárs* did. They are so recklessly improvident.

Q.—And so caused a want of tilling power when the rains came subsequently ?

A.—Yes, certainly.

Q.—Did the Charitable Relief Committee buy any that were going for sale ?

A.—Not that I know of.

Mr. Bourdillon.—You said in your written evidence that the petty cultivators preferred to work on village works even on lower rates rather than go to public works ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Your reason was that they liked to be nearer their fields ?

A.—It was fatal for people who had a little *rabí* to leave their crop.

Q.—After the rains in July you kept the village works open ?

A.—Not in Mungeli save in a very few places.

Q.—Was there any fluctuation on works after the fall of rain ?

A.—People went to plough.

Q.—And returned again ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And so village works were very valuable?

A.—Yes, it enabled them to take the opportunity of ploughing their fields.

*The President.*—Having regard to the maintenance of self-respect and moralities, did you find anything to lead you to believe that there was a relaxation of moralities on public works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—That also would naturally be a reason which would dispose you in favour of village works?

A.—Yes, it does.

[*The witness subsequently wrote :—*]

*Memo.* 1. I stated that the *mālguzārs* of the district are in debt. They are now indebted as a class; but as a rule not very seriously. Before the famine of 1896-97 they were extremely prosperous.

2. I stated that I heard complaints of short sowing in 1896-97, owing to people being on kitchen relief. This is not quite correct. What I meant was, lack of labourers for weeding was due to this cause.





Q. 1.—People had not completely recovered from the previous famine. A good year was much needed. There was distress in one part of the district.

Rice good in 1897-98 and 1898-99, save in isolated parts of district. Wheat good in south-west of district in 1898-99—rest poor.

Q. 4.—About 10 per cent.

Q. 5.—Figures are not available, but the percentage of (a) is the highest in the Provinces, and as to (b) I fancy  $\frac{1}{3}$ ths of the cultivators hold less than Rs. 5 worth of land or under 8 acres a piece. Besides this, the standard of cultivation is very low, even over such small holdings.

Q. 6.—The failure was so extensive that we were quite sure that relief would be needed. But we relied on the observed condition of the people to decide the moment of distributing relief: though all the machinery for distributing it was prepared as soon as a severe failure of the crop became assured, which was nearly one month beforehand.

Q. 7.—The labourers began to look thin and people began to leave their villages in one or two instances.

Q. 9.—I cannot speak as to lists of large works being ready, but lists of small works were not ready, nor was there any need to make lists. In Bilaspur almost every village has a site for a tank, &c., which the people know well and can point out readily.

Q. 10.—I understand that large works were supposed to be the backbone of the system. Though, I think, the idea a wrong one. I prepared a programme of works in 1896-97, and it used to be my duty as Settlement Officer to list possible sites for works in each village. These lists were never made use of. No work can be started without a responsible officer first seeing the spot, and any Inspector, patwari or malguzar can tell him of a site. Besides, as all our small works are carried out through landholders, the suitability of a work depends largely on the presence of a capable manager—a fact of which no permanent record is possible. Not the slightest difficulty was found in selecting sites or starting works in the absence of such lists: nor would there be again.

Q. 13.—It was decided that the people were not sufficiently recovered from the 1896-97 famine to take land improvement loans: so none were given.

Q. 14.—In a few isolated tracts of small extent, especially round Bilaspur town itself, where some 20 wells were dug by well-to-do cultivators to irrigate rice. They were partly successful. I calculated it cost Rs. 5 to get a crop of Rs. 12 in one case.

Q. 52.—At the outset, owing to the delay in starting large works, the district entirely depended on them. Afterwards they actually only covered areas where Public Works Department works were not started. They might easily have covered the whole district and with great advantage to the people and Government.

Q. 53.—Tanks, embankments for wheat-growing, the excavation of undulating land near nalas, to fit it for rice-growing, while a channel was dug at one side to carry off surplus water. I regard this as the most valuable of any. A few channels to carry water from or to tanks and from nalas were dug.

Q. 54.—There were only a few tanks dug under the Public Works Department or under direct civil control. Nearly all were Civil Department tanks under landholders.

Q. 55.—(a). We gained from the villagers a general idea of what the lie of the tank should be: we then laid it out on the ground in a symmetrical form, for facility of measurement; and we explained to the manager how to set out the work. It was invariably laid out by *dāgbēling*; and the unit was a local one, called a *dangui*. The surface of the tank or other work was *dāgbēled* in squaues of a *dangui* each. Every time the Charge Officer or Tank Officer came to the tank he would consult with the villagers as to the direction in which work should proceed; and show them how to lay out the work in a systematic manner in the direction decided on:—

(b). No measuring was required, save for depth. Every day the manager went round the work; and whenever he saw a square completed he paid for it, after satisfying himself as to depth.

(c). The malguzar or other well-to-do person who managed the work paid the wages.

They were entered when paid in an account book leaving a separate page for each family: it was thus found possible to check the last two or three payments, which workers usually readily remembered. Payments were made every three days or so: the people preferred this: and as whole sums such as 4 annas or 8 annas were given at once, there was less opportunity for cheating. I only found one case of cheating: and that was where a *malguzar* employed a *patwari* to make his payments. I heard privately that in one or two cases *malguzars* secretly took back small amounts from the workers; but I was never able to detect such cases: and though I have no doubt they occurred, they were rare. Though our *malguzars* are probably the least intelligent in the Central Provinces, the arrangement worked well. It needed, however, constant supervision: and many managers always needed to be kept up to the mark.

The landlord was not responsible for the work *quā* landlord. He was as a matter of fact usually manager: often a well-to-do tenant or Bania was appointed.

Any amount found short after finally measuring up the work was recovered from the manager: such cases were, however, exceedingly rare—and the balance in hand was almost always correct. The manager had an advance of say, one-third the total estimated cost of the work. The work was measured by the Charge Officer for Tank Officer before this advance was expended—and he gave the manager a certificate of expenditure which enabled him to recoup his advance from the treasury. I regard this as an essential feature, and to this periodical measuring up I attribute the fact that so little had to be recovered from managers; and the absence of fraud as between managers and Government.

Q. 56.—No attempt. The work was purely piece work. The average earnings per unit were taken out each week for each work, and the rate of *dangnis* per rupee was fixed so as to enable each unit to earn a fair average rate. After a month or so any person of average intelligence could make a very fair guess as to what was the proper rate for a particular work. Our Charge Officers were persons of intelligence, to whom such discretion could safely be left. Admission was restricted to needy persons living in adjacent villages.

Q. 57.—Well-to-do persons were refused relief, but practically none such applied for it. I only turned one family off work for this cause.

Q. 58.—If Public Works Department works were disorganised, all classes preferred them, as they could get off with a nominal task. Chamars, who are notoriously lazy and lacking in self-respect, preferred large works. Hindus, especially Kurmis, preferred village works, where, although the task was harder, they could keep in their houses and could work at any hour of the day or night they liked. This was a great point in the hot weather, and natives as well as myself often noticed the inferior condition of workers under the Public Works Department after March, compared to village workers; and all agreed that though the task was larger on the village works, and though the Public Works made great efforts to secure adequate hutting and drinking arrangements, yet the absence of shelter and home comforts caused a falling-off in condition.

The above remarks are largely drawn from conversations with landholders and workers during and since the famine, as well as from my own experience.

Q. 59.—Very decidedly. I think it is quite possible to keep the whole of the Bilaspur District going simply from small works. Granting this, such a course is desirable because—

- (a) The test is a severe one, especially for Chamars and low castes.
- (b) It is far more elastic, *e. g.*, mistaken orders from head-quarters are not so likely to have bad results.
- (c) The works done are extremely useful. The people take an interest in the work, a point which struck Mr. Vaughan Nash very forcibly when he saw a tank-work with me. Whereas, road-works beyond a certain point are nearly always useless; they are almost always left unfinished; and when finished carts as often as not prefer another route.
- (d) The morals of the people suffer to some extent on large works, whereas in small works they do not.
- (e) The people look in better condition on small works.
- (f) Small works are far less costly to Government; and they add security to Government revenue for the future.
- (g) Elaborate rules as to wages, &c., are unnecessary on village works.
- (h) There is far less opportunity for cheating because little or no staff is required for small works.

Q. 60.—There are a few Baigas and Gondes in the Government jungle and in the Pandaria Zamindari. These are all the aborigines I saw. They were perfectly ready to accept relief at home, but they would not go into the plain to relief-works. They worked hard at basket-making or grass-cutting, but were no use at digging. The jungly people always looked in excellent condition. The semi-jungly people suffered more than the purely jungly tribes.

Q. 62.—Kitchen feeders were generally made to work in the fields, when able-bodied, during the rains.

Q. 63.—Weavers were relieved at first, afterwards they were employed on stone-breaking, and weaver relief closed where such work was available.

Q. 64.—Yes, they did; they were unfit to carry loads or work in the sun, but they could break metal under shade very well, if given a light task at first.

Q. 68.—As to small works, there were virtually no dependants. The family system prevailed, and small children carried small quantities of earth, while old women, lame and blind men squared up the work as it proceeded. One blind man was the digger of his family, and earned good wages. Where persons were really unable to work or their family to keep them, they got gratuitous village relief. A good Circle Officer fitted the one into the other very well.

Q. 75.—As a matter of practice, the Circle Officer really drew up the lists. He had some 8 or 10 patwari circles under him, and saw every village once or twice a month. The Checking Officers were the Circle Officer, the Charge and Assistant Charge Officer and the Deputy Commissioner, Tahsildar, Superintendent of Land Records or other superior officer. Altogether each village was seen twice a month by some one or other. Recipients were inspected at each check.

Q. 76.—Payments were always in cash, monthly, at the village.

Q. 78.—Brahmins, Rawats, or other good castes. Chamar cooks were not employed. Very few adults of good caste fed at kitchens in the part of the district with which I was concerned, but I understand that in other parts of the district, adults of good caste were somewhat more numerous. Adults were ashamed to be seen sitting among children eating: caste did enter into the matter but not so much as age. When an adult of good caste ate at a kitchen, he usually went outside his own village. I attribute the comparatively low numbers on kitchen relief in the Bilaspur District partly to the fact that Chamar cooks were not employed, partly to mere chance, a fact of much importance. If a custom is once set, everyone follows it.

Q. 82.—(a) All suspended, save in one or two Zamindaris. (b) Orders not yet received.

Q. 83.—On crop failure.

Q. 84.—Before.

Q. 85.—Yes, they do, under the law. I only found one case where a malguzar (a Bania) contravened it.

Q. 86.—I only saw one tract of small extent where it would have been fairly possible to collect even a small fraction of the revenue. It was in the part alluded to in Answer 85, and there the people who paid up 8 annas of the rent, did so under great pressure, and with extreme difficulty, so far as I could tell: I met one case of a man who paid a zamindar arrears by selling a portion of his seed-grain. No doubt some persons were able to pay in spite of a total failure, but the only persons who were able to say who could and who could not afford to pay are officials of too low standing to be allowed so much discretion; a Settlement Officer could say, but there are Settlement Officers in one or two districts only.

Q. 87 (a).—A general and intense failure of crops:

(b).—Previous bad seasons;

(c).—Loans of grain and cash come almost entirely from tenants and malguzars in Bilaspur. Money-lenders pure and simple are very few. Consequently a failure of crops supervening on bad years left lenders with empty grain stores, and deprived the average tenantry of credit.

(d).—Labourers are more numerous I believe here than anywhere else in the Central Provinces, and the number of tenants who have only very small holdings is greater than in any district I known of.

(e).—The previous famine had accustomed people to receive relief.

Q. 88.—In view of the above, I do not believe that relief was at any time excessive or defective in my district.

Q. 89.—I saw no proprietor employed on relief save as a mate. There was no difference between occupancy and ordinary tenants as to the numbers that came on relief. The size of the holding usually indicated a man's resisting power more than its right.

Q. 90.—Much more so. From experience, and because a custom had arisen, and had not had time to be forgotten, of going on relief.

Q. 91.—As to the first part of this question, see Answer 87. As to the second part, I found many men on relief-works who could no doubt have kept off them but at the expense of their seed-grain or ornaments, which were afterwards sold to buy seed-grain.

Q. 99.—Very generally, but people usually had a sufficiency of proper diet, so that the effect on their health was less marked.

Q. 105.—No.

Q. 106 (a).—Double-cropping is generally on the increase in the black soil tracts of the district. It tends to disappear in years of short rainfall. The general tendency of bad seasons is to lessen double-cropping.

(b). The tendency has been to sow crops which cost less to sow and do better in a dry year, *e. g.*, tilli and kodo. The former is a non-food export crop; the latter is a food non-export crop. Wheat and rice, which are more valuable crops, and cost more to sow, have shrunk. The former is a purely export crop in Bilaspur. The latter is mainly a local food crop, but is also largely exported.

Q. 107.—Yes, almost universally in ordinary years.

Yes, a slight tendency in famine years. Usually the amount of grain given is less, say,  $\frac{1}{2}$  of normal, in a famine year.

Q. 112.—The morals of Chhattisgarh are so loose that there is not much room for deterioration. But I have no doubt that large works made things to some extent worse, and I heard of numerous cases where women had left their husbands and *vice versa* and taken up with other persons on large works.

Yes, the substitution of small works, which is quite feasible in Bilaspur.

BILASPUR :  
The 31st December 1900. }

C. E. LOW,  
Settlement Officer,  
Bilaspur and Hoshangabad.

CAPTAIN D. J. C. MCNABB, I.S.C., DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, RAIPUR.

*The President.*—Which is your district ?

A.—Raipur.

Q.—Were you in Raipur in the famine of 1897 ?

A.—No.

Q.—You began relief I observe in October. What was your first measure of relief ?

A.—Village relief.

Q.—What form did it take ?

A.—Cash doles.

Q.—How long did you continue cash doles before you introduced kitchens ?

A.—Cash doles were commenced on the 7th of October and kitchens were commenced on the 11th of November.

Q.—Your cash doles continued during the whole of October ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In your answer to the eleventh question, the question about the sequence of relief measures, you say the sequence was organization of private charity, opening of Government forests, poorhouses, village kitchens ?

A.—Organization of private charity commenced on the 4th of August, the opening of Government forests took place on the 19th of August, poorhouses and kitchens were opened in November.

Q.—Then you would like to correct your answer I suppose ?

A.—Yes, cash doles must have come at some subsequent date, I think the cash doles were commenced on the 7th of October 1899.

Q.—What do you mean by the organization of private charity. Was it restricted to the town of Raipur or did it extend to the villages ?

A.—It extended to every village ?

Q.—What do you mean by private charity ?

A.—Preliminary lists were made out. Intelligent members of the village community and the *mālguzārs* were made personally responsible that the people got sufficient to eat, till we got them on to gratuitous relief.

Q.—Who made out the lists ?

A.—The lists were made out under the supervision of Charge Officers and Circle Officers.

Q.—What is the unit of your administration ?

A.—The unit was the *patwāri* circle.

Q.—Of how many villages does that consist in your district ?

A.—The average number of villages in the *patwāri* circle are, I should think, from 6 to 8. I do not give these figures with any confidence.

Q.—At all events it won't be less than 5 ?

A.—No.

Q.—When did you commence making out these lists ? Did you act on the orders of the 14th of August ?

A.—It was before that. We began making these lists in July.

Q.—You did not act upon them ?

A.—No.

Q.—You commenced them in July ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Before any official orders issued regarding the imminence of distress ?

A.—We had kept the most distressed parts of the district under inspection from before August.

Q.—What led you to do that ?

A.—There was a prolonged break which caused great anxiety in July.

Q.—Then did you take that action on your own responsibility or on orders received ?

A.—On orders received.

Q.—In July you commenced making out village lists ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And by what time were these lists completed ?

A.—By August.

Q.—You held these lists by you in readiness ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You received official orders—when did you act on them ?

A.—About the 4th of August.

Q.—Did you proceed to put people on lists to be fed ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You did not feed them from Government funds ?

A.—No.

Q.—You called upon *mālguzārs* and the heads of the village to support them ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—That went on until when ?

A.—The 7th of October.

Q.—On the 7th of October what action did you take ?

A.—We selected certain portions of the district and gave cash doles to 311 people.

Q.—In the month of October did you do anything further ? My object is to know how you started. I find that in October you had 27,758 on gratuitous relief and 48,000 on public works. You commenced gratuitous relief with cash doles. How did you proceed ? Did you extend your cash doles or begin kitchens ?

A.—On the 14th October we opened village works. We then restricted the amount of village relief.

Q.—Did you distribute cooked food in October ?

A.—No.

Q.—Were the 27,000 people on gratuitous relief at the end of October, all receiving cash doles ?

A.—No. I had 44,000 people on works.

Q.—I am now dealing with gratuitous relief. My object is to ascertain whether in October you trusted to the distribution of doles or began kitchens ?

A.—Entirely doles.

Q.—Were public works open too ?

A.—Public works were opened on the 28th of October.

Q.—In October you had 48,000 on works. How were they distributed ?

A.—On the 28th of October 44,000 were on village works, 3,600 were on public works. The numbers on village works steadily rose.

Q.—The numbers on village works were far greater in your district than in any other that we have dealt with. There was an enormous increase on your works in December. Was this due to anything in the administration of the public works or any relaxation in discipline, or is it entirely due to distress ?

A.—It was partly due to distress and it was also due to overcrowding on public works.

Q.—How many public works did you open with ?

A.—On the 30th of December we had 18 public works.

Q.—Were all these separate charges, or was there more than one charge on each work ?

A.—They were separate charges.

Q.—On one work had you not more than one charge ?

A.—Not at that time.

Q.—The charge consists of about 5,000 to 6,000 people.

A.—Yes.

Q.—You commenced with 18 charges in December ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Are you prepared to speak for the general organization of the Public Works Department ?

A.—To a limited extent.

Q.—Did the Public Works begin with the recognized scale of establishment for each charge ?

A.—Yes, they began with it.

Q.—In January you had 18 charges, how many people had you on ?

A.—167,000 people.

Q.—Your 18 charges were framed to provide establishment and control for 110,000 people ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—I find in December they had 305,000 people or three times as many as they should have had, but those charges were not increased ?

A.—The Public Works Department could not open the works. They did not get tools and plant on the spot quick enough.

Q.—They were instructed to open with how many charges ?

A.—They were not instructed to be open with any specific number of charges.

Q.—They must have got some authority to fix it at 18 charges ?

A.—The 18 works were fixed at a conference which was held about August as likely to provide for any number that would come on to relief in the near future.

Q.—You anticipated that 18 charges would be sufficient for the pressure.

A.—Yes.

Q.—And in accordance with that the Public Works Department got their establishment together ?

A.—I don't think they were authorized to entertain their establishment.

Q.—In December that anticipation was entirely falsified because you had three times the number on your works than you should have had ?

A.—Yes, if you take the number of people on works.

Q.—How many people had you on village works in December ?

A.—At the end of December 153,000.

Q.—I see that the number on Public Works increased in January and took a great jump in February. It went on in March and April and then fell. Were the Public Works able to increase their charges ?

A.—They increased their charges very much. At the end of December there were 18 charges, at the end of January 22, at the end of February 35.

Q.—Do you know what system they adopted of providing the establishment?

A.—No.

Q.—According as pressure increased, were they able to get the same quality of establishment or were they obliged to fall back upon a worse quality?

A.—I think they were forced to fall back on a worse quality.

Q.—At that time was there free admission to works?

A.—We suspended admission to works for a while.

Q.—For what time was admission suspended?

A.—For five or six weeks. The works were re-opened in the early part of March.

Q.—Did the people who were on works at the time of suspension remain on the works?

A.—No, if the numbers on any of the charges exceeded 8,000 people were drafted to village works to relieve the pressure on public works.

Q.—Was that with the object of reducing the charge to moderate dimensions?

A.—Yes, 8,000 was the limit fixed.

Q.—When the works re-opened in March was the difficulty completely met?

A.—I think it was.

Q.—The figures never rose again?

A.—I think the rush was due to a great extent to the distress and to wages being so much higher on public works.

Q.—The remedy in your opinion would be a more accurate forecast of the numbers coming upon works and the provision of more establishment?

A.—I don't know. I think the forecast was 600,000.

Q.—The forecast for these 18 charges would have been adequate if the establishments had been on the spot?

A.—Yes.

Q.—If the establishment had been there and had been able to enforce an adequate task people would have been deterred from coming in such numbers, would they not?

A.—I don't know. They would have come all the same to obtain the extra wage.

Q.—They came because the task was very light in the first place and they came also to get higher wages.

A.—Undoubtedly the inability to exact the full task did attract people to works.

Q.—And when you strengthened your establishment and were able to enforce a good task, people ceased to come to public works in such numbers?

A.—Yes.

Q.—When did people cease to come in such numbers?

A.—We re-opened public works to free admission on the 17th March; on the 17th March the numbers were 270,000, next week there were 235,000 next week 228,000; next week 222,000; and the next week 205,000.

Q.—After the re-opening of your public works there was no longer a rush. The moral it teaches is the necessity of having strong establishments ready at the time and an adequate supply of tools and plant on the spot?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You say tools and plant were not ready?

A.—Yes, I think they were ordered, as public works were opened, by the Commissioner.

Q.—Now as regards village works, what was the character of your village works, were they tanks?

A.—Almost entirely tanks. At the end of the famine we took up other works.

Q.—How did you arrange for your village works. Did you prepare a list of villages in which tanks might be dug and estimates of the cost?

A.—Yes, but we made no estimates.

Q.—To whom did you entrust the construction of tanks and the control of the business?

A.—To local people of influence in every case.

Q.—Substantially all the work was done through local people?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you employ any public works agency in locating the tanks?

A.—The charge officer and the local officer.

Q.—Was there any estimate of work prepared beforehand?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was there any system of getting *mālguzārs* of villages benefitted to advance a part of the cost of the work?

A.—Generally men agreed to spend from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 2,000 on a tank on the undertaking that Government would complete the tanks if their means were exhausted.

Q.—Were there many instances of that sort?

A.—About 20 to 30.

Q.—If it was a declared article of policy that Government on the building of these tanks throughout the country would contribute one quarter or one half or whatever it might be, in accordance with the means of the owners, do you think that more might be done than was done?

A.—I think most *mālguzārs* would gladly contribute something.

Q.—Do you think that that would be a useful plan to pursue in ordinary circumstances?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Are these tanks intended for irrigation?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is free irrigation allowed from them?

A.—Taking payment is extremely rare.

Q.—The tanks you have been speaking of were mostly repairs of old tanks, I suppose.

A.—A number were repairs.

Q.—Had the village community as a rule the right of using these old tanks?

A.—I think that was the general custom.

Q.—Do you think if the *mālguzār* contributed something to the repairs he would allow the free use of the tank or would it be necessary to make conditions?

A.—I do not think it would be.

Q.—Do you think that the average earnings per head were more upon village works than on public works?

A.—They were less on village works.

Q.—It has been said that people were allowed to earn on village works as much as they pleased and that they were paid by results. Was that the case in your district?

A.—No.

Q.—How did you regulate payments?

A.—Exactly as in the case of public works.

Q.—Nobody could earn more than a certain sum?

A.—No.

Q.—The wage was fixed with reference to the price of grain?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Who enforced the task?

A.—Regular measurements were made of each gang's work.

Q.—Who measured up the work?

A.—The *muharrirs* under the orders of the Officers-in-charge and these measurements were checked by the circle officers.

Q.—The same system prevailed on village works as on public works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Only that the controlling agency was non-official?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was information given to the *mālguzārs* as to the class of persons to be employed?

A.—Yes, afterwards when numbers became large it was found necessary to restrict admission by tickets.

Q.—Did you find that it worked out to the employment of particular classes on village works and the relegation of the remainder to public works?

A.—No. I don't think so. The conditions obtaining in public works and village works were really so similar.

Q.—Was the *mālguzār* strict in limiting the employment on village works to people of his own village?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did these works go on, or could they go on after the rains?

A.—I think a considerable percentage could go on.

Q.—In the rains work would be restricted to the levelling of banks: it would not, I suppose, be possible to do any excavation?

A.—On 20 per cent. of the works it would be impossible to do excavation.

Q.—I now come to the rains. When the rains approached you had on your public works 170,000 against 284,000 on village works. Then your village works immediately fell, 200,000 went off village works in that month. While a much smaller number went off public works; 50,000 only went off public works. Did you establish kitchens more widely then?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What was the reason for that?

A.—Because of the policy declared of meeting distress during the rains by kitchen relief.

Q.—Don't you think people would at that time have found work in the fields?

A.—People did work in their fields and came back to kitchens.

Q.—And came back to kitchens also?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Can you tell us what was the *kharif* area of last year as compared with the normal?

A.—85 per cent. of the normal area.

Q.—The *kharif* is mostly rice?

A.—A good deal is *kodon*. The majority is rice.

Q.—There was a shortage of 15 per cent.

A.—Yes.

Q.—To what do you attribute that shortage?

A.—I think want of seed. There was no grain in the country to sow.

Q.—Could that have been corrected by *takāvi* advances?

A.—We issued 7 lakhs of *takāvi*.

Q.—Well, of course, there must be a limit to the advances made. Do you think if 10 lakhs, say, had been advanced, that more land would have been sown?

A.—I think so. In proportion as Government advances money, native money-lenders advance less themselves.



Q.—Do you think that this large extension of the policy of feeding people in kitchens withdrew any of the labour which would otherwise have been employed in the fields?

A.—No, I made special enquiries. 90 per cent. of those fit to do so were working in the fields.

Q.—Ten per cent. of those who were fit for work were not working. Would not that account for your 15 per cent. of shortage?

A.—I hardly think it would.

Q.—It is only a suggestion. It may have had some effect, may it not?

A.—Possibly, it may have, but I think that is negligible.

Q.—You had 564,000 on gratuitous relief in July, of those 539,000 people were fed at poorhouses and kitchens. What is the population of your district?

A.—About  $1\frac{1}{2}$  millions.

Q.—Do you think that relief was overdone at that time?

A.—I think more people came to kitchens than was absolutely necessary.

Q.—I understand that everybody who consented to submit to the test of cooked food was free to come?

A.—Yes.

Q.—There were instances when people took food away?

A.—There may have been isolated instances.

Q.—There were instances in which people worked in the fields and came to kitchens and had their meals there—all that would point to the fact that there was a surplus of kitchens. Can you suggest any means by which some restriction should be adopted?

A.—I think we did have a restriction; the charge officers checked the lists of persons admitted and turned off all those who were able to support themselves.

Q.—When was your district settled last?

A.—I think 12 years ago.

Q.—What was the term of settlement, can you say?

A.—It is now being re-settled.

Q.—Have you got the figures of the cultivated area in your district?

A.—I am afraid not.

Q.—Do you know the pressure of revenue on the cultivated area? What does it come to?

A.—I have not worked it out.

Q.—You had 583,000 people on gratuitous relief in August, nearly one-third of the population of the whole district—how many children were there? Can you say?

A.—Speaking from memory the number of adults closely approximated to the number of children; perhaps 60 per cent. children and 40 per cent. adults.

Q.—Have you any idea of the distribution of males and females?

A.—No, I have not got the figures.

Q.—You stated that there was a great rush in December, was there any idea then prevailing in your district that the system would be the old code system of a minimum wage and task work. Did you find any persons on your works who came with that idea?

A.—No.

Q.—Had you task work?

A.—We had the intermediate system.

Mr. Nicholson.—In your answer to question No. 104 you say that the railway was frequently unable to cope with the work of importing food grains, why was that?

A.—I enquired from such railway officials as I met and the invariable answer was given that they had not sufficient rolling stock and engines.

Q.—You say frequently; had you many complaints from dealers?

A.—Yes, dealers made frequent complaints.

Q.—Dealers in towns?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did they make any complaints that the price of grain was unduly high owing to the shortage of importation?

A.—Yes. They could not get orders complied with quickly; I frequently could not get contractors to supply grain to kitchens at what I considered should be a reasonable rate.

Q.—Did you make any enquiry on the subject from the railway authorities?

A.—I did not write direct to the Manager of the railway.

Q.—Have you reason to believe that the Manager of the railway was written to?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was there any improvement on the part of the railway as a result of that representation?

A.—Yes, it improved at the latter end of the famine.

Q.—Did you make personal enquiries at railway stations?

A.—Yes, frequently.

Q.—And returns were given by station masters?

A.—Nearly all the grain is imported to Raipur and sent from there to the district; and I got regular returns from station masters.

Q.—The general result of your enquiries was that owing to the difficulty of importation of grain you believe prices were higher and grain scarcer than it should have been?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were there any improper practices, such as the giving of presents, in connection with the importation of grain?

A.—Dealers frequently asserted that those who wished to get out their grain had to make presents to railway servants.

Q.—Did you ever test these allegations?

A.—I had no means of doing so.

Q.—I think you had weaver relief in some parts of your district, had you not?

A.—On a very small scale.

Q.—What is your opinion as to whether weavers should be drafted on to ordinary relief works rather than be given relief at their own trade, looking at it from the point of view of economy?

A.—Relief in their own trade means the establishment of an additional system of relief, which is a disadvantage. Weavers come on to works as carriers just as women come. On the whole I don't think that the numbers in my district are sufficient to warrant the starting of an additional means of relief.

Mr. Bourdillon.—Looking at your mortality figures. In May you had a death-rate of 3.15 which rose to 3.48, 4.25 and it got to 5 in September. What was that due to, was it due to cholera?

A.—We had cholera very badly.

Q.—Were any special means taken in the way of disinfecting wells?

A.—Yes, we dug 3,600 wells and all the wells were disinfected and we discouraged the people from drinking water from tanks; the water at each well was drawn by a special establishment appointed for the purpose.

Q. 1.—Apprehensions of an unfavourable monsoon were current very early in the year 1899. The hot weather was an abnormal one. Frequent and heavy showers prevailed and the average temperature was below the normal for the time of the year. The forecasts issued by the native Pandits were also unfavourable, and the year had already been pronounced by the native astrologers to be an unlucky year even before it had commenced.

The breaking of the monsoon was therefore watched with unusual anxiety. Both harvests were generally good in 1897-98 as was the kharif of 1898-99, except in the north of Drug. The rabi of the latter year was poor. But there are many villages in Singa and Drug, especially the former, and in the western Zamindaris, in which the harvests since the last famine had been bad and there had been serious deterioration. In particular the Lawn pargana in the north-east of the district, lying partly in Singa and partly in Raipur had bad crops in 1898-99, and was in a very depressed condition.

Q. 2.—The kharif sowings were normal in 1899. In reports from this district the area of the year 1894-95 has been assumed as the normal area. The kharif sowings in that year were 2,166,000 acres as compared with 2,192,000 acres in 1899.

Q. 3.—(a) The average rainfall of the district from 1st June to 30th September of the 10 years preceding 1899 is 45·80 inches.

(b) The actual rainfall for the rainy season of 1899 (June to September) was 22·79 inches, and its percentage to the average 50.

(c) The rain ceased on the 6th September 1899.

(d) The distribution of the rainfall from June to September as compared with the average is as follows:—

	June.	July.	August.	September.
	4·16	6·55	11·00	1·c8
	22·79			
Average ...	7·78	15·85	14·94	7·22

Q. 4.—The actual kharif harvest of 1899 represented 14·80 per cent. of the normal harvest on a normal cultivated area.

Q. 5.—The percentage of the total population dependant exclusively on agriculture is as follows:—

(a) As petty cultivators	...	854,000	53·90
(b) As labourers	...	273,600	17·40

Q. 6.—The necessity of relief was chiefly assumed from the crop failure.

Q. 7.—The observed facts which led me to recommend that the machinery of relief should be set in motion in my district which I did on the 25th September 1899 were as follows:—

(a) The failure of the September rains which had practically destroyed all hopes of obtaining crops equal even to the amount of seed-grain sown.

(b) The cessation of weeding and all other agricultural operations which give labour to the poor classes,

(c) The rise in the price of grain which rose from 13 seers per rupee on September the 12th to 11 seers on September the 23rd.

(d) Crowds of destitute persons besieged my office daily clamouring for work, who, though not in any way emaciated, were undoubtedly hard pressed for food.

(e) The large number of persons who took to collecting and selling fodder in all towns and villages to earn a livelihood.

(f) The personal observations made by myself and my famine circle officers who reported from all parts of the district that the poorest classes were forced to supplement their rice with vegetables and forest produce.

(g) The failure of private charity to support those usually dependant on it.

(h) The tendency to deteriorate in physical condition in the very poor, which, although it was never permitted to approach to emaciation, was sufficiently marked to those with previous experience of famine to be a real proof of distress.

Q. 8.—Actual famine relief commenced in the first week of October when gratuitous cash relief doles were given to 311 persons. During the second week of October 18 village works were opened giving relief to 8,221 persons. The week ending 28th October saw a large extension of relief of all kinds and the first Public Works Department charge at Baloda was opened during the same period.

Q. 10.—The relief programme contemplated large Public Works as the back-bone of the relief system. Lists of village works were prepared before the commencement of relief and when the pressure on Public Works Department charges became too heavy, were utilized with great effect.

Q. 11.—The sequence of relief measures was as follows :—

- (a) Organization of private charity.
- (b) Opening Government forests.
- (c) Poor-houses.
- (d) Village kitchens.

Q. 19.—Small village works were first opened and were intended to be mere stop-gaps until the large Public Works which had been sanctioned were opened.

Q. 23.—Admission to large Public Works was free to all persons willing to submit to the labour test. No other test was imposed.

Selection by tickets within a 5-mile radius of a work was imposed at the commencement of the rains. Admission being free to all residents outside a 5-mile radius who were willing to comply with the labour test.

Q. 24.—Public Work charges in this district were limited to a maximum of 5,000 by the Code, and my experience in this district goes to show that such charges served an area of about 50 square miles in the more densely populated parts of the district. The area served by such works varied according to the severity of the distress and the density of the population.

Q. 30.—In this district no distinction was originally made in the classification of men and women. As a matter of practice, however, the sexes divided themselves naturally into diggers and carriers and this was acknowledged later on. In my opinion women keep in good condition on a smaller ration than men and should be paid a smaller wage.

Q. 32.—In my opinion a system of payment-by-results, if started in time, is a suitable means of relief even in the severest famine. In such a system, however, the old and the weakly must be protected by the institution of infirm gangs working on a task-work system.

Q. 34.—In my opinion the scale of wages adopted on large Public Works was unduly liberal.

My reason for this opinion is that though the numbers employed on village works were at their highest 282,000 as compared with 242,000 on Public Works Department works, they were paid at a pice less all round than on Public Works Department works and yet remained throughout in as good condition as those employed on Public Works Department works who returned daily to their villages; and these were the large majority. The task, moreover, was never less on village works than on large Public Works. That families saved on Public Works Department works there can be no doubt. This has been freely admitted to me by the workers themselves since the closing of relief. When inspecting works, moreover, I found that the earnings of any fairly large family was in excess of the amount requisite for their actual maintenance.

Inspection on works, moreover, showed that the daily amount spent at the bania's shops as compared with the total amount of wages issued was very small, and that the majority of workers did not purchase for their consumption the full grain equivalent of their cash wage.

Q. 51.—In the beginning of January 1900, the overcrowding of Public Works had been forced to such an excess that they were completely disorganized and was found impossible to exact an adequate task. Orders were therefore issued closing large Public Works on which the number exceeded 8,000 to free admission and permitting the transfer of excess numbers to village works under Civil Agency. Under these orders large drafts were made from large Public Works Department works to village works without any hitch. This gave breathing time to the Public Works Department and allowed them to re-organize their charges, so that whereas, on the 13th of January, they had 20 charges open employing 212,376 persons on the 10th of March they had 38 charges open employing 239,450 persons.

Q. 52.—In this district village works played an important part in the scheme of relief. The highest number recorded in village works has been 282,000 as compared with 242,000 on large Public Works.

Village works were of two kinds—

(a) Small village works.

(b) Large village works employing up to 6,000.

Q. 53.—Village works were mostly confined to tank-works, but they also included one or two road-works and sections of the Vizianagram-Raipur Railway.

Q. 54.—Village works were—

(b) Under the supervision of the Civil Agency, and (b)-(ii) were conducted through landholders and other non-official agency.

Q. 55.—The arrangements made—

(a) for laying down the work,

(b) for measuring it up,

(c) for paying wages,

was exactly the same as on large Public Works.

The Officer-in-charge, generally the malguzar, was responsible administratively and financially under the supervision of the Famine Charge Officers.

Q. 56.—The Code task system was regularly worked. The scale of wages as regulated by Circular letter No. F-6, dated the 14th April 1899, was first fixed at 5; 4; 3 pice for diggers, carriers and working children respectively, and was afterwards raised to 6; 5; 3.

At first work was given to all who wanted it and not only to special classes. Certain villages were, however, told off to each village work and only members of these villages were admitted, with the exception, of course, of emaciated persons.

Q. 57.—When numbers increased village lists were maintained showing those entitled to relief and admission was restricted in accordance with those lists.

The system worked well.

Q. 58.—Village works often existed in close proximity to large Public Works, and as long as the latter were open to free admission, labourers left the village works for the large Public Works as soon as they were opened.

Q. 59.—From my experience, I believe, that village works should in future form the back-bone of famine relief in the district. My reasons are as follows:—

(a) This district gives facilities for the nearly indefinite construction and repair of village irrigation tanks.

(b) Such work is of more utility than the collection of gitti and moorum and forms an appreciable protection against future crop failures.

(c) Village works are less expensive than large Public Works to organize and control.

(d) Landowners work willingly as Officers-in-charge and are personally interested in the exaction of a full task.

(e) Such works keep the population in their own villages and prevent wandering.

(f) They are less apt to demoralize the public and loosen family and moral ties.

(g) It is easier to ascertain the actual condition of applicants for relief than on large Public Works, and when necessary to impose restrictions to admission.

(h) It is easier to keep numbers on each relief work within manageable limits.

(i) Officers-in-charge being resident in the same locality as the workers are less likely to defraud their own neighbours and tenants amongst whom they have to pass their lives than the strangers occupying similar positions in Public Works Department charges.

Q. 60.—Aboriginal tribes are very largely represented in this district. It was not as a general rule found necessary to apply any special test to them. They came willingly to works and to kitchens. It was only in the Zamindari of Khariar, the most isolated portion of this district, which had not suffered during the famine of 1896-97, and where they were quite unused to State Relief, that any difficulty was experienced. Distress in this Zamindari declared itself very late and very suddenly. Even so, the orders laid down in Circular letter No. F-5, dated the 14th August 1899, were found sufficient for dealing with the situation. At first it was found necessary to issue grain doles to these aboriginals to save them from starvation, but by degrees, the majority of them accepted kitchen relief.

Q. 63.—Weaver relief was organized in a few of the larger towns and villages.

Q. 64.—The majority of weavers, however, I found to be quite capable of working on ordinary works as carriers.

The numbers on this special relief were inconsiderable. The operations of the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund in the purchase of cloth and blankets did much to assist this class to maintain itself by its ordinary profession.

Q. 68.—Dependants on both large Public Works and on village works were given cooked food.

Q. 69.—The form of gratuitous relief mostly employed in this district was kitchen relief. This form of relief was preferred to cash doles as the acceptance of cooked food was of itself deemed a sufficient test of distress until after the commencement of the rains. The selection of persons for cash doles is extremely difficult and necessitates a scrutiny into the domestic condition of families which is very undesirable. It also affords great scope for petty peculation by the subordinate famine staff. There is, moreover, little guarantee that individuals to whom gratuitous relief is granted actually get the whole or even a reasonable portion of the relief given.

Q. 71.—Three poor-houses were opened in this district and were mostly frequented by wanderers, the numbers in them was never large.

Q. 74 (a).—Before the rains broke 700 kitchens were opened in the district.

(b) After the rains broke, the number of kitchens was raised to 3,767. In this district it was not so much a question as to what radius a kitchen would serve as it was to open sufficient kitchens to keep the number in each kitchen at a manageable figure.

Q. 75.—In most kitchens inmates were fed once a day at a fixed hour which was the same in all kitchens.

Q. 77.—Admission to kitchens was free to all willing to accept cooked food until the 14th of August 1900, when Famine Circular No. 53 placed certain restrictions on admissions to kitchens. Previous to this order, however, kitchens were frequently and strictly inspected by Famine Charge Officers and all who were obviously maintaining themselves struck off the lists.

Q. 78.—The castes of cooks employed were—

- (a) Brahmins.
- (b) Rauts.
- (c) Chamars,
- (d) Gonds.

At first there were considerable objections displayed to accepting cooked food in kitchens. Every one wanted a cash dole in preference. A firm stand was, however, made to the extension of cash dole lists, and the influence of malguzars and local Brahmins enlisted to uphold the theory that acceptance of cooked food at the hands of a Brahmin or a high caste cook did not put those of inferior caste out of their brotherhood, and by degrees this caste objection was overcome. Chamars showed the least objection to take cooked food, then came Gonds, Kamars and the other jungle tribes. The last to come being the more orthodox Hindus.

Q. 79.—Malguzars and village mukaddams were nearly invariably in charge of kitchens which were constantly inspected by Circle Officers and Famine Charge Officers. During the rains when the kitchens formed the chief item of relief, kitchens were inspected not less than once every ten days by a Charge Officer or his assistant.

Q. 87.—From 9th December 1899 to 13th October 1900, numbers in receipt of relief in the this district exceeded 15 per cent. of the population affected. The reasons for this are as follows :—

- (a) Severity of the distress.
- (b) The exhaustion of the resources of the population at large due to the famine of 1896-97 from which they had had no time to recover.
- (c) Familiarity with famine relief.
- (d) The loosening of caste and social prejudices against the acceptance of State relief which loosened in proportion as the numbers in receipt of relief increased.
- (e) The fact that a considerable proportion of the population of this district consists of Satnami Chamars. These people came on to kitchens *en masse*, the well-to-do with the indigent. They have no caste scruple in accepting relief of any kind and flocked on to works with the same disregard of their real necessity.

Q. 88.—In my opinion from the time the numbers on relief exceeded 33 per cent. of the population affected relief may be said to have been excessive. I give this opinion on the assumption that relief exceeding what is necessary to save life is excessive relief. At the same time, I believe, that relief which is under this definition excessive did much to ensure the district being fully sown this year (as it has been) and in saving cultivators from being forced to sell their plough-cattle and so in many other ways mitigating the indirect effects of the famine.

The grounds on which I base this opinion are to some extent embodied in the answers to the questions immediately following.

The following facts also, I think, go to support my opinion. From 11th January to 15th of March Public Works Department works were closed to free admissions when the numbers on any Public Works charge exceeded 8,000, and from this time onward and during this period no large increase in the number of workers on large Public Works Department charges was reported. Considerable drafts were also sent from large Public Works to village works during this period. All these drafts and all fresh applicants for employment on village works were subjected to the best of selection according to the village lists maintained. Yet this action had no ill effect on the death-rate or on the general physical condition of the population. Orders for the restriction of kitchen relief were received on the 14th August 1900, with the result that the reduction of number in kitchens during the following five weeks amounted to 2,83,000; the reduction in the first week being 95,000. The last Census shows that 54 per cent. of the population are petty cultivators and only 18 per cent. labourers. It is therefore obvious that the majority of those excluded from kitchens were engaged in weeding their own fields, subsisting the meanwhile on their own resources, and yet there was no deterioration in the general physical condition of the public.

Q. 89.—Ordinary tenants and occupancy tenants formed the majority of those on relief, and not a few improverished malguzars were also found on works.

The answer to question 5 shows that 53·90 of the population are petty cultivators and that 17·40 are labourers.

Q. 90.—The population during the late famine was far more ready to come on relief than in the famine of 1896-97. This is, I think, due to—

- (a) poverty ensuing on the previous famine, and
- (b) familiarity with famine relief.

Q. 91.—Private credit had decidedly suffered. Debts contracted in 1896-97 had not been repaid. The money-lending and grain-advancing classes had been badly hit and showed great reluctance to risk more money in the face of the unprecedented succession of bad seasons. There is, I think, no doubt, that knowing from their experience of 1896-97, that Government would not allow them to die of starvation, but few possessed of any resources dreamed of expending them before they came to the State for relief.

Q. 92.—The tests of the Code are not, in my opinion, sufficient to prevent persons not in actual need of relief from seeking to obtain it. As regards the Satnami Chamars they have signally failed in their object.

Q. 93.—As far as this district is concerned, I am of opinion that the cooked food test should be super-imposed on the work test, and no relief given except in the shape of the former with the sole exception of such as are physically unable to come to a kitchen. At such times of the year, as it is impossible to exact a task in return for cooked food, admissions to kitchens should be restricted to those entered in the village gratuitous relief lists.

Q. 104.—The railway was frequently unable to cope with the import of food-grain. Owing to this cause several contracts which I had entered into for the supply of grain in isolated tracts were thrown up. In discussing the local price of grain as compared with the price in the exporting centres, the delay in the despatch of their orders was frequently cited to me by the grain-dealers as a reason for the prices not being lower. Traders also asserted that those who made local Railway authorities at the exporting centres presents obtained precedence in the despatch of their orders over others.

Q. 104-(a).—No special arrangements were made to keep District Officers informed of the import of food-grains by rail. Such information as I got was obtained from the Municipality and from the local Station Masters and was not very reliable. I cannot now give actual figures showing the proportion of the consumption of the district that was imported, but from personal observation I can state that local rice was rarely to be found in any bazar or bania's shop. In my opinion quite 85 per cent. of the food consumed was imported.

Q. 112.—The massing of people on large works does, in my opinion, tend to disorganize family life, to weaken social restraints and to relax moral ties, and in question 59 I have already suggested that village works such as existed during the past famine from which the people returned daily to their homes obviates these objections.

RAIPUR:

*The 4th January 1901.*

D. J. C. MACNABB,

*Deputy Commissioner.*



REVEREND MR. J. LOHR, MISSIONARY.

*The President.*—What district do you know well?

A.—Part of the Raipur district.

Q.—Have you been long there?

A.—Off and on—32 years.

Q.—Were you there during the famine of 1897?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In which of the two famines, do you think, was the pressure greatest?

A.—In 1897.

Q.—What method of relief do you consider better—relief by village works or relief upon large public works by which the people are drawn away from their villages?

A.—Small village works are the best.

Q.—What is your reason for thinking that?

A.—Because people can get to their homes and keep their families and they are able to take care of their children and cattle whereas if they go to large relief works they lessen those ties.

Q.—Did you notice the last question regarding the imposing on people the necessity of residing on works; and its effect upon the maintenance of family relations and moral ties. Has any instance come to your notice in which family ties have been dissolved owing to residence on large relief works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Are people who spend their time on large relief works on coming back to their villages held in the same repute as before?

A.—Oh, no.

Q.—Do they fall in repute?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do they lose caste?

A.—Well, not always; in several cases they have lost their caste also.

Q.—Is the practice of divorce common amongst the class with whom you are brought into contact?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Have you known many instances in which the wives have been divorced on any occasions on account of their conduct on large relief works?

A.—Yes, a good number.

Q.—These things do not occur or they occur to a less extent in village works?

A.—Much less.

Q.—So that from the moral point of view do you think it better to have small village works in preference to large works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—There may be conditions in which it is impossible to provide the necessary relief by small works; and in case it was inevitable, that recourse should be had to large works, could you suggest any arrangement whereby moral ties and family relations might be better maintained?

A.—No: I could not suggest any.

Q.—Which do you prefer Mr. Lohr;—the system of giving doles, money doles or grain doles, to people to be consumed in their homes or the practice of getting them to go to kitchens for food?

A.—In my experience I believe kitchens are more suitable and best for the people.

Q.—What is your reason?

A.—In distributing doles those persons who receive doles are generally old people and they get their Rs. 2 or Re. 1-8-0. I know of cases in which most of it was taken away by the son or by the daughter and carried away from the mother; so that the mother had very little left to live upon.

Q.—You think in the system of distribution of doles the weaker goes to the wall?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What would you say of a mixed system whereby the children would get kitchen relief and the old people would get relief in their houses by the distribution of grain or money doles?

A.—I am not in favour of that.

Q.—Do you not think that old people are submitted to some hardship by having to go long distances?

A.—In my charge we had kitchens in every village.

Q.—If you do not go in for such a large distribution of kitchens as that, but, if say, you had a central kitchen in every two or three villages, is it not some hardship to go that distance?

A.—I do not think so—most of our people are *chamars*.

Q.—For the lower caste people you think kitchens are better?

A.—Yes.

Q.—For the better class of people what would you say ?

A.—For those I would suggest doles.

Q.—On the whole, Mr. Lohr, do you think that to some or any extent the Government charity was imposed upon in the tract within your knowledge, that more relief was distributed than the actual necessities of the case required ?

A.—No, I do not think so : Government was very liberal as regards relief in this famine.

Q.—Then are you inclined to say that the scale of relief was too liberal ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Your criticism is as to the scale of ration and not to the number of persons who received it ?

A.—Yes.

Q. 1.—Very favourable. Normal in 1897, but below normal in 1898, in my charge.

Q. 2.—Yes.

Q. 3.—(a) From 40 to 45 inches. (b) 16 inches 26 cent. in my charge; percentage 2'90. (c) September the 7th or 8th. (d) June 1 inch 5 cent., July 3 inches 5 cent., August 10 inches 2 cent., September 1 inch 19 cent.

Q. 4.—*Nil*. In only 4 or 5 villages in my charge a 1 to 3 anna crop was gathered.

Q. 5.—(a) In my charge 60. (b) In my charge 30.

Q. 6.—Both.

Q. 7.—The total failure of kharif and rabi crops. The rush of people seeking help and work.

Q. 8.—Small village relief works. Heavy task work

Q. 9.—(a) Yes, to a certain extent. (b) Yes. (c) Yes.

Q. 10.—Small village work. Yes.

Q. 11.—(a) First. (b) *Nil*. (c) On work *nil*, elsewhere second. (d) *Nil*. (e) *Nil*.

Q. 12.—(a), (b), (c) and (d) As ordered by Local Government.

Q. 13.—Yes, to weavers only. To weavers only. In whole.

Q. 14.—(1) No. (3) Yes. (a) No. (b) Yes. (c) Yes.

Q. 15.—Digging of tanks and bunds, cleaning out and deepening of old tanks. Under Charge Officer. Under Charge Officer personally in my case.

Q. 16.—The task prescribed by the Local Government.

Q. 17.—As much as possible. Yes, up to February all four; but after February rest-day allowance was not given.

Q. 19.—In my charge small village works.

Q. 20.—Under my control as Charge Officer. Yes No. None. Yes.

Q. 21.—Yes. I do not know.

Q. 22.—Yes. 2 and 3 questions—I believe so.

Q. 23.—Yes, I believe so. I am not sure with respect to Public Works Department relief works.

Q. 24.—I cannot say. From my charge about 10 to 12 miles.

Q. 25.—Do not know.

Q. 26 and 27.—Unknown.

Q. 28.—~~In~~ my charge I had gangs of 90 persons. Yes.

Q. 29.—Unable to answer.

Q. 30.—No. No.

Q. 31.—Unable to answer with respect to Public Works Department.

Q. 32.—I certainly believe that for the people in this part of the Raipur district, the system of payment by result is the best of famine relief if started in time.

Q. 33.—From all as far as possible. Greater leniency. Later the people got over-worked, specially diggers.

Q. 34.—Adequate. Good. Some no doubt did save a little, specially where a number of family members were on work. Yes.

Q. 35.—Rest-day wages were given at the beginning, after February none. I believe rest-day wages are not absolutely necessary as people could earn sufficient to support themselves on the rest-day.

Q. 36.—No. Minimum wages were not too high. Yes.

Q. 37.—In my charge. Yes. No.

Q. 38.—In my charge daily. Daily payments, I believe, are more desirable.

Q. 39.—In my charge daily. Yes, certainly.

Q. 40.—In my charge to the workers individually. Certainly to pay the individual.

Q. 41.—No.

Q. 42.—Something like Section 208 of Famine Code of 1898.

Q. 43.—Maximum wages 21 pies per day to men, 18 pies for women; children attended kitchens. Infirm gangs for weakly persons. Piece work. The latter.

Q. 44.—No.

Q. 45.—Muster rolls.

Q. 46.—Local Government. Deputy Commissioner. Unknown.

Q. 48.—The Local Government I believe. I do not know.

Q. 51.—Yes. Unknown.

Q. 52.—In my charge the principal relief.

Q. 53.—Digging tanks, bunds, roads, &c.

Q. 54.—(a) No. (b) Yes. (i) No. (ii) Malguzars responsible for the performance of full task. Muharrirs for muster rolls.

Q. 55.—(a) Laid down by Charge Officer. (b) By muharir or Charge Officer. (c) Through malguzar.

Q. 56.—Work was given to every one in need of relief, but well-to-do cultivators were not taken on.

Q. 57.—Yes. Yes.

Q. 58.—Had no large public work near.

Q. 59.—Small village works in my opinion the most suitable and desirable, because the people can attend to their homes, houses, cattle, &c.; do not lose their homes and family ties broken, &c., &c.

Q. 60.—No. No. On village relief as the others in my charge.

Q. 61.—Yes. But not much used in my charge.

Q. 62.—Yes. Later part of rains, but not very many.

Q. 63.—Yes. For weavers.

Q. 64.—Reluctance to go to ordinary relief works. No, not unfit to work.

Q. 65.—Yes, I believe so. No.

Q. 66.—None in my charge; it was not necessary.

Q. 67.—No, except some grass was supplied.

Q. 68.—(a) On small village works. (b) In cash and cooked food.

Q. 69.—Cooked food mostly, but cash was also given to some.

Q. 70.—No. Selected by persons with local knowledge. Yes.

Q. 71.—None in my charge.

Q. 72.—No.

Q. 73.—Yes.

Q. 74.—In my charge.—(a) 8 kitchens; (b) 22 main kitchens and about 25 branch kitchens. From 1 to 1½ mile in the rains, but before the rains 2 to 3 miles.

Q. 75.—10 to 12 chittaks to adults; 6 to 8 chittaks for children. One meal only; fixed time. Except very old, feeble or ill, all had to feed on the premises.

Q. 76.—No, not very close to relief works.

Q. 77.—Free to certain extent; persons able to support themselves not allowed to come.

Q. 74~~a~~—Do not know as I had no poor-house.

Q. 75~~a~~—In my charge I myself. By me personally.

Q. 76~~a~~—(a) In cash. (b) Monthly. (c) At the homes of the recipients.

Q. 77~~a~~—To old, ill, unable to work, *parda nasin* only, for about 10 months.

Q. 78.—First Brahmins; later on for different castes different caste cooks. None.

Q. 79.—Schoolmasters, patwaris, respectable and trusty landholders. Supervision by Charge Officer personally.

Q. 80.—None. *Nil*.

Q. 81.—*Nil* in my charge, so do not know.

Q. 82, 83, 84, 85, and 86.—Unable to answer.

Q. 87.—It did exceed 15 per cent. because we had a total failure of kharif and partly of rabi crops, and people had not quite recovered from the effects of last famine.

Q. 88.—I can well say that the relief given in this famine was not defective and not excessive.

Q. 89.—Tenants and labourers.

Q. 90.—Yes, much more than last famine. Because they had benefited by the different forms of ~~relief~~ in former famine of 1896-97.

Q. 90.—Also because they had got rid of certain superstitious ideas about famine relief.

Q. 91.—No.

Q. 92.—Yes.

Q. 93.—No opinion.

Q. 94.—The general system, but during the famine I got my information personally from the kotwals, malguzars and police.

Q. 95.—In my charge mortality was not high, except in April and May. Wells and tanks were disinfected every 8 or 10 days.

Q. 97.—(a) Segregation. (b) *Nil*. (c) Segregation. Yes, sufficient. Charge Officer.

Q. 98.—Yes. Very seldom.

Q. 99.—None in my charge.

Q. 100.—No, not in this famine.

Q. 101.—*Nil*.

Q. 102.—Only a few were left, which were taken over by Missionaries.

Q. 103 & 104.—No.

Q. 104 (a)—None.

Q. 105.—No, except at the time of weeding in the rains, when the labourers took to the kitchens.

Q. 106.—I do not think so.

Q. 107.—Yes. No. Yes.

Q. 108.—I do not know.

Q. 109.—Unable to answer.

Q. 110.—No opinion.

Q. 111.—No opinion, as my charge was too small.

Q. 112.—Yes, certainly. I would suggest as far as possible small village works as near as possible to the village, so that the people can return to their homes in the evening.

J. LOHR.

MR. A. D. YOUNGHUSBAND, I.C.S., COMMISSIONER, CHHATTISGARH  
DIVISION.

*The President.*—When did you join your division, Mr. Younghusband?

A.—In April 1897.

Q.—In your general opinion how do the two famines compare? Do you think that the pressure on the people was, on the whole, this year or in 1899?

A.—I think that the famine of 1899 was, on the whole, greater; greater both in intensity and in the extent of the area affected.

Q.—Have you any official connection with feudatory states?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Are they under your control?

A.—Not directly under my control—they are directly under the Political Agent.

Q.—Is the Political Agent your subordinate?

A.—He is my subordinate.

Q.—Had you any occasion, with regard to the distress, to make any tours in the feudatory states, with a view to seeing what degree of crop failure prevailed there?

A.—I did not see very much of them personally. I had quite enough to do in the British districts.

Q.—Did you entrust that to your subordinate—the Political Agent?

A.—Yes.

Q.—He made tours with the object of ascertaining, and from the reports that he made to you what did you infer regarding the crop failure in the feudatory states? Were the crops good or bad compared with those of the British districts?

A.—They partook very much of the character of those in the adjoining British territory. The two tracts are interlaced.

Q.—Had the states suffered to any extent in 1897?

A.—Some of them, severely.

Q.—And was the pressure in the Native States, this year, as great as the pressure in British districts?

A.—Yes, I think it was.

Q.—I understand that Sambalpur was not so much affected as Raipur or Bilaspur?

A.—No.

Q.—You consider that some districts were famine districts and some scarcity districts?

A.—A certain portion of Sambalpur was distinctly a famine area.

Q.—I notice that your relief in some parts of Sambalpur, both in the shape of works and in the shape of gratuitous relief, was considerably less than in the adjacent districts of Raipur and Bilaspur?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You have under your control about 15 feudatory states?

A.—Fourteen.

Q.—Those 14 feudatory states reached down to the Madras frontier?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The character of the failure in those states was approximately nearer to the Raipur and Bilaspur type than the Sambalpur type?

A.—I think they must be separately treated in groups.

Q.—How many of those states were less affected?

A.—About six.

Q.—They would be called scarcity districts?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Then the remaining eight partook very much of the type of Raipur and Bilaspur. Which would you consider was the more heavily stricken of the two, Raipur or Bilaspur?

A.—Raipur.

Q.—Of the remaining eight states, which of them were as bad as Raipur?

A.—They are described in the Chief Commissioner's printed notes that were drawn up in August 1899. At that time a list of six was given; four connected with Raipur and two connected with Bilaspur; but conditions got worse after that.

Q.—Well, the states adjoining Raipur you thought were more distressed than the states adjoining Sambalpur?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you find that there was any immigration from those Native States?

A.—Not to a great extent.

Q.—Into which district was there most immigration?

A.—Into Sambalpur.

Q.—So the more distressed states managed to look after themselves?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You had relief organization established under your general control there?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Well, the Commission are not authorized to enquire into the famine relief of Native States; but it is of importance with regard to the immigration question. I need not pursue the matter further; when you say that any immigration which took place took place in Sambalpur and inasmuch as the relief administration in Sambalpur was not heavy, I may take it that the relief in the Native States under you was adequate?

A.—Yes, it was generally adequate.

Q.—Have you been present during the evidence that was given to-day? Do you agree with the evidence given regarding Raipur that gratuitous relief first began with the distribution of doles?

A.—Yes.

Q.—That continued up till December?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you watch and institute, as things went on, any comparison between the advantages of cooked food and the advantages of grain doles?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What is your opinion?

A.—I formed a very strong impression in favour of cooked food.

Q.—There are two points from which to look at it; the point of view of test, and the point of view of economy. From the test point of view what is your opinion as to kitchens? Do you think that they made a good test?

A.—Yes, I think they did.

Q.—Do you think they afforded a good test all through?

A.—I think the value of the test was weakened as time went on.

Q.—Do you attribute the weakening of the test to the increase of relief or to the growth of the habit of taking cooked food?

A.—To the growth of habit. It became a fashion to take cooked food.

Q.—If you had to do the thing over again would you be disposed to attach to the kitchen test any process of selection?

A.—Certainly.

Q.—On what character of selection would you be disposed to rely most? Would it be a selection as to the individuals who would be admitted to the kitchen or selection of tracts of country with reference to the intensity of crop failure?

A.—I should prefer selection of individuals.

Q.—Do you think it would be safe to entrust to the village agency (the *mālguzār* and the *mukaddam*) assisted by the Government Inspector the duty of imposing that test?

A.—Yes, I think so, subject to control.

Q.—Did you find any clear evidence to show that the village people were disposed to be very liberal in their distribution of gratuitous relief?

A.—It was tending to be excessive at one time.

Q.—But knowing the *mālguzárs* and the people of your charge do you think Government would be fairly safe in treating them with confidence and saying, we wish to maintain the poor in your villages, we do not want to give money to those who could do without it; do you think they would be sufficiently careful in the distribution of the Government dole?

A.—I do not think I would be prepared to leave the doles unreservedly in their hands.

Q.—You began by gratuitous relief and then you began public relief works and village relief works. Test-works formed no portion of your programme?

A.—Except in the Sambalpur district.

Q.—You had test-works there, did you find them of use?

A.—No.

Q.—By whom were they administered, by the Public Works or by the Civil Agency?

A.—Not by the Public Works Department.

Q.—Were you satisfied with the enforcement of the test on those works?

A.—The test-works practically failed owing to the test being too severe.

Q.—Poorhouses you had none?

A.—Practically none.

Q.—Did you find there was any wandering at all either on the part of immigrants of Native States, or of the people in your jurisdiction?

A.—The only district in which there was any wandering at all was Sambalpur.

Q.—Would poorhouses have been useful there?

A.—No, I think not. They did start a poorhouse there at a later stage.

Q.—We had it in evidence that some of the kitchens were practically poorhouses, although not conducted with the same supervision as poorhouses would be. Did any of your kitchens become of that type?

A.—I think not. If I knew of a kitchen becoming practically a poorhouse, I should insist on its being made a regular poorhouse.

Q.—I understand that you did not insist upon residence on the public works?

A.—No.

Q.—And you had no process of selection, i. e. the exclusion of the people who lived within a certain radius from the works unless they got a ticket?

A.—None until the rains.

Q.—You had no distance test?

A.—No.



Q.—All those who came to the works were allowed to work there and were paid provided they underwent the test ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—We were told that in the Raipur district the public works became disorganized about the month of December. The rush of labourers on the works was too great to be dealt with by the establishment which then existed, and the works had to be closed to all new admissions until the establishment was strengthened. Do you think that the rush might have reasonably been foreseen and provided for ?

A.—I do not think anybody could have foreseen the numbers that would require relief from the first.

Q.—To what do you attribute that great increase of the numbers, do you attribute it to the fact that owing to the unpreparedness of the Public Works Establishment life on the works was more easy than it otherwise would be, or do you attribute it to a sudden growth of pressure on the people.

A.—I think there can be no doubt that the numbers did become excessive.

Q.—Well, the moral is that Public Works Establishment ought to be considerably in advance of even the estimate of extreme numbers likely to require relief ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You had difficulty in your Division of getting qualified agents for carrying on public works ?

A.—Are you referring to the Public Works Department ?

Q.—I am referring to such persons as work agents and the officers in charge ?

A.—There was a difficulty, and the standard of qualification was greatly lowered.

Q.—The superior authority in control of the Public Works was the Executive Engineer ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—He is your subordinate I understand ?

A.—He is and he is not.

Q.—In ordinary departmental work I understand the relation, but in famine times is he not altogether your subordinate ?

A.—I do not think he would dream of attempting to question any order I might give him.

Q.—Was there a clear understanding that in all cases he was to consider himself as your subordinate and to take his orders from you ?

A.—Yes. It was laid down in the orders. My orders were absolutely final.

Q.—Did you ever find that in practice those orders were questioned ?

A.—No, at the same time I must confess I was a little chary about giving orders.

Q.—Did you ever know of instances in which the absence of orders from you led to any inconvenience ?

A.—No.

Q.—Do you think that the rule of the Code ought to be made clearer upon that point in regard to the subordination of the Commissioner of the Division ?

A.—No, I think not. I do not think we could get anything clearer.

Q.—It has been said in regard to the position of the civil officer that the primary order might issue from three different authorities, did you hear that evidence given ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you ever know such a thing occur or anything like it ?

A.—No.

Q.—Would you think it desirable that the subordination on that point should be made quite clear ?

A.—I think that if a case of that sort arose and was referred to me I should hold that it is absolutely clear that the orders of the Deputy Commissioner should prevail ; and in cases of that sort I should order that the Deputy Commissioner's orders should be carried out.

Q.—If the officer in charge had received these conflicting orders he was bound to act on the orders of the Deputy Commissioner ?

A.—Yes

Q.—In order to avoid such conflict of authority, is it not necessary that all orders from the sanitary authorities or the Deputy Commissioner should come through the Sub-Divisional Officer who is the Public Works Officer in charge of the particular work ?

A.—I do not know that that would be the remedy. The principle, I always tried to insist on, was that every order given in the course of inspection must be put in the order-book and I think it is very desirable that every order-book should be sent to the Executive Engineer.

Q.—The Executive Engineer has two or three districts under his control : you cannot get at him always, you want to get at the man who is immediately responsible for the particular work ; that man, as I understand, under your system was the Sub-Divisional Officer ?

A.—It is rather difficult to understand exactly who it was.

Q.—You have got the Executive Engineer in charge of two or three districts. You have got no officer in a district who is responsible for the whole district. You have got no officer in the district who is territorially responsible. Whoever you have got is only responsible for particular works. ~~Well,~~ if you had the officer who is responsible for the whole district you naturally would give the orders to him ; failing him would it not be better that the order should go to the Sub-Divisional Officer ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You had only one famine supervising officer for the whole district?

A.—No, we had a great many.

Q.—There was no concentration of authority?

A.—No.

Q.—In the district of Raipur your system of village works attained to a great extension?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Comparing the two classes of work, which do you think was more acceptable to the people and more economical to the Government having in view the basis of all famine administrations—the adequate grant of relief?

A.—I have no doubt that village works are the better so far as they are capable of being utilized.

Q.—Do you think, in your division, if you had to go through the same thing again, that you would be able to give, through the amount of distress you have had last year, adequate relief by village works, excluding public works altogether?

A.—I think so.

Q.—The advantage of village works is that people are kept near their homes—family life is in no way disintegrated and the cost of the supervision is very much less?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The results also are more useful to the people than the results of public works?

A.—Generally so.

Q.—Do you think in any future scheme of village works, you could associate the *mālguzārs*, the landed proprietors, with yourself on the basis of some contribution on their part towards the cost of the work?

A.—I think that entirely depends on the condition of the country; I do not think it would have been possible in the case of this famine.

Q.—It depends upon the condition of the district and the circumstances of the landlords?

A.—Yes.

Q.—But taking a district in fairly good circumstances is there a disposition on the part of the landlords to recognise their liability in that way?

A.—I think I may say there is a certain disposition.

Q.—Of course they would be better pleased if the Government would take the whole responsibility?

A.—Yes. On that point I should like to say that what I should advocate under favourable circumstances is the system of famine loans.

Q.—What you have in your mind is this: you know the population of the village, you know the various classes of the village and what people are likely to come upon relief; you estimate the quantity of earthwork required to give those people relief; and you would say—This village should be able to tide over the time by an expenditure of Rs. 5,000. You are the landlord. We will advance you Rs. 2,500. Now, would you advocate a survey of the villages of the district with a view to locating beforehand the works which would thus be undertaken?

A.—Yes, I think certainly the more that could be done in that way beforehand the better.

Q.—Do you think you were sufficiently liberal over *takāvi* in the beginning of the famine?

A.—We had practically no *takāvi* in the beginning of the famine.

Q.—If you had gone in for a policy of *takāvi*, do you think wells would have been dug to so large an extent as to save the *rabi* crops?

A.—I think the conditions were unfavourable. It was very doubtful whether the *rabi* crops would come to anything.

Q.—But would it not stimulate the people to exertion and self-reliance if you gave them at that time large advances whereby they could dig their wells and water their crops?

A.—Yes, I am not quite sure that I understood your question, I thought you were referring to the seed grain; you are referring to land improvement.

Q.—If in August and September you had had any distribution of *takāvi* loans would it have been possible for the people to dig wells and save a certain portion of the crops and water the soil for the *rabi* sowings? That was in September and October?

A.—I am afraid I am not prepared to answer that question.

Q.—Do you think that larger *takāvi* advances in May for the purchase of seed would have been useful? I understand that they were not made up to the full estimate of the local officers. The Local Government had only certain *takāvi* funds to advance from and the volume of that fund depended upon the Government of India. But if this *takāvi* fund had been larger in May and June last, would more lands have been sown?

A.—I think so, in all probability.

Q.—Then you advocate a policy of liberal *takāvi* advances in the rains?

A.—Yes

Q.—It has occurred to me that the free distribution of grains or food in kitchens and the custom that prevails in some of your districts that any man—able-bodied or not—could by going to a kitchen get relief must have reduced the population who were willing to labour? Did it occur to you?

A.—No, we were watchful on that point and my opinion is that it in no way diminished the supply of labour; on the contrary the people at the kitchens were also labouring at the same time.

Q.—Of course there was the motive of earning more; if they could go to kitchens while they were labouring, their reasons for remaining away from labour would diminish?

A.—Yes, the effect of the kitchens I think largely reduced the price of labour; and the man who could get his free meals at the kitchens would work for a very much lower wage than he would require otherwise.

Q.—Have you formed any opinion as to the effect of the Government land revenue? Can you say that the Government land revenue was a contributory cause in any way to the pressure which came upon the people last year?

A.—Certainly not. I think it is a very light revenue throughout the division.

Q.—You gave large suspensions of revenue?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think the landlords and the *mālguzārs* managed to collect their rents in any of the districts in that year, 1899-90?

A.—No, I think not.

Q.—Have they treated their tenants with the same leniency as they have received?

A.—I think so.

Q.—Is there a good feeling prevailing between the landlords and tenants?

A.—I think very fair.

Q.—You think the *mālguzārs* at present are rather hard hit by the famine?

A.—Oh, yes, there is no doubt about it.

Q.—Do you think that since the last famine the indebtedness amongst the cultivating classes has increased to any substantial extent?

A.—I think they are certainly in a more serious condition now than they were in 1897.

Q.—If you had two or three years of good harvests, do you think matters would right themselves?

A.—I should think so.

Q.—Is there any other measure that you would be disposed to advocate?

A.—No, I think not; in two or three good seasons for the next few years things would right themselves.

Q.—Is the interest taken by *banias* and *mahājans* on agricultural loans, high; or is it the usual interest from 12 to 14 per cent.?

A.—I think it is no more than the usual interest.

Q.—Do you think there is any scope for association amongst the people for their getting money at a cheaper rate? Do you think the landlords would be willing to combine and establish a small fund, which would be the nucleus of village banks?

A.—I think there is scope if anybody would take the lead.

Q.—Do you think that if the Government took the lead and acting with the landlords made certain reasonable advances at their rate of interest, that the intentions of the Government would be comprehended?

A.—Yes, I should be inclined to be hopeful that they would.

Q.—You think there is room for the experiment?

A.—Yes.

Mr. Bourdillon.—Don't you think that if test-works had a fair trial they would be some guide to the necessity for relief?

A.—No. I do not advocate the system of test-works at all.

Q.—Not because the system was bad?

A.—Because it was badly carried out.

Q.—In reply to question 88 you said that relief given at kitchens enabled the labourers to carry on and to accept as sufficient what the *mālguzārs* could pay them—you mean that the *mālguzārs* were only able to pay them less than the ordinary wages?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Then with reference to question 95 you said you sent a special report? What is the purport of that special report?

A.—In the first place, I questioned the accuracy of the death-rates returned, in view of the growth of population within the last 10 years.

Q.—For what reason was the mortality high? Was it due to exposure on works and going to the kitchens?

A.—The reports of charge Officers went to show that exposure was a far more potent cause of mortality than want of food.

Q.—Your Sambalpur figures for September ran up very high. Was that due to cholera?

A.—It was very largely due to cholera.

[The witness subsequently wrote:—]

I desire to supplement my evidence in one or two points of detail, in which my reported answers fail to adequately express my meaning.

2. In my evidence, I find the following:—

Q.—Poorhouses you had none?

A.—Practically none.

I mean simply that the aggregate numbers in poorhouses were at no time at all considerable in comparison with the total on relief, owing to the constant attention paid to the important duty of drafting out the inmates. I do not suggest that we could have done, or could in a future similar famine do, without poorhouses. See my further answer as to the conversion into a regular poorhouse of a kitchen which had practically become such. This was actually done in more than one case.

3. In my answers, as to the difficulties of getting qualified agents, I had in my mind the subordinate agency entertained by the Public Works Department, much of which was admittedly of inferior quality. I cannot have understood the President's question as including the "officers in charge" of Public Works Department works, for whose selection I was personally responsible, and who, as a body, proved distinctly satisfactory. My first nominations were all of picked men. When the rush came, in December and January, my list was rapidly exhausted, and I had to be content with a lower standard, until fresh sources of supply, notably from the British and Native armies, were opened. Then the inferior men were weeded out and replaced. Though there was a certain percentage of bad bargains, the universal testimony is that the officers in charge, as a whole, did splendidly, the best of them, class for class, being the British Non-Commissioned Officers.

4. I must also qualify the following :—

Q.—Is there a good feeling prevailing between the landlords and tenants?

A.—I think very fair.

The *chamār* tenantry of large portions of Raipur and Bilaspur are notoriously turbulent and difficult to deal with and to collect rents from. In his dealings with them the landlord by no means invariably comes off best, though he is doubtless often to blame, in particular cases very much so, for the unsatisfactory relations. But this does not very materially affect the point on which I understand that I was being questioned, whether, speaking generally of the division as a whole, the leniency shewn in the collection of revenue does or does not reach the tenants. I am decidedly of opinion that it does.

5. In my next answer I appear to have made a more optimistic admission than I intended, as to matters righting themselves in "two or three years of good harvests." I meant no more than that the mischief done is not in my opinion irretrievable. For "two or three years" I would substitute "a succession of good seasons." I am not prepared to name a precise number; but I am very decidedly of opinion that it will take far more than two or even three of the best years to restore the conditions which prevailed a few years back.

6. *Test works (my answers to the President and Mr. Bourdillon).*—My view as to these, based on such experience as I have had, is that they are dangerous and unsatisfactory criteria of either the presence or absence of distress. A slightly inadequate test may attract to a work crowds who do not need relief, while a slight excess in severity will deter (as was the case in Sambalpur) those who do need it. In the adjustment of the test, a very slight error either way may wholly vitiate the results. And even assuming an absolutely ideal test to be set down with exactitude on paper, much must depend on the manner of its application by the subordinate on the spot. Much also will necessarily depend on the temper and disposition of the people affected, their previous experience or want of experience of relief measures, and the like. Without wholly condemning test-works, which may often furnish useful supplementary evidence, I would strongly deprecate such evidence being accepted as in any way conclusive. I prefer myself to rely on the personal observations of inspecting officers. On receipt of the first disquieting accounts of any given area, I would, rather than open tests-works, strengthen the local inspecting staff, and insist on their furnishing constant and full reports. And on such reports, checked of course by the personal inspection of superior officers, I should feel justified in applying for sanction to the introduction at once, and without further test, of regular relief measures.

Q. 1 to 5.—Detailed statistics are to be found in published returns. The situation up to 11th August 1899, is summarized in the Raipur Conference Notes attached to Famine Secretariat printed letter No. 3372—3373, dated the 15th August 1899. In the most general terms, it may be stated that (a) the greater part of the Chhattisgarh Division suffered very severely under the conditions culminating in the famine of 1896-97, (b) it had, on the whole, but subject to important local reservations, been making fairly satisfactory progress towards recovery up to the beginning of the rains of 1899, (c) the rains of 1899 opened under normal conditions, (d) the first apprehensions of famine were aroused by the holding off throughout the latter part of July, and beginning of August, of the second fall of rain needed for *biasi* operations, (e) this rain eventually came in August in time for the *biasi*, though late to be on the whole satisfactorily performed, (f) there was then no further rain, the result being that the crops, from which the first danger had been averted, after all came practically to nothing.

Q. 6, 7 and 8.—Village relief (cash doles) was the first form of relief given. This was sanctioned, as found to be necessary, on the lines laid down in Famine Circulars F-3 and F-9, dated respectively the 14th and 17th August 1899. No formal tests were applied; but reliance was placed on the results of detailed personal inspection by Charge Officers and Deputy Commissioners. The principal observed facts relied on were: (a) the failure of crops as ascertained from village to village, (b) signs of deterioration in physical condition, particularly among children, (c) in certain cases a tendency to wander. In the Sambalpur District, where relief was a little later than elsewhere, test kitchens were first opened.

Q. 9.—(a) A programme of famine relief-works was drawn up after the last famine. The works on it were all located, but surveys and estimates had not generally been made. In particular it had not yet been found practicable to carry out a suggestion made in 1898, for a detailed professional survey of the irrigation capabilities of Chhattisgarh. Lists of village works were duly prepared and kept in readiness by Deputy Commissioners. (b) Yes.

Q. 10.—Large public works. The programme had to be departed from owing to the Public Works Department being unable to keep pace with the demand for employment.

Q. 11.—(e) came first, and (b) last. Test works were attempted only in Sambalpur, where they did not prove a success. Kitchens on Public Works Department works were regarded as an essential feature of such works, and were opened with them. Kitchens elsewhere were in Bilaspur organized almost *pari passu* with village relief, in Raipur a little later; in Sambalpur and in the Feudatory States they were at first the sole form of gratuitous relief.

Special orders were issued by Deputy Commissioners to all mukaddams of villages on the first threatening of distress, in accordance with (t) of the additional duties notified under Section 141 (1) of the Central Provinces Land Revenue Act, and inspecting officers were specially charged to keep mukaddams up to their duty.

In the town of Raipur private charity was first regularly organized at a meeting held on the 18th November, when a District Committee was organized on lines admitting of its being afterwards affiliated to the Indian Charitable Fund. In other towns similar measures were taken.

Q. 12.—The system was that prescribed in Famine Circular No. F-3. It was organized from the very first.

Q. 13.—No "famine loans" were issued, *vide* paragraph 3 of Famine Circular No. F-22, dated the 4th October 1899. Ordinary land improvement loans were issued only in the Sambalpur District, where conditions were different from elsewhere. Such takavi advances as were issued for the *rabi* sowings at the end of 1899 were under the ordinary conditions.

Q. 19.—Small village works under Deputy Commissioners were in fact first opened. They were intended then as a stop-gap until the preparations for Public Works Department works could be completed, though eventually they had to assume a far more important role. It is understood that the remaining questions under this head down to 51, refer to the latter class of works.

Q. 21 and 22.—See Public Works Department General Order No. 287—7630-F., dated the 20th September 1899.

Q. 23.—Admission was free except when, for special temporary reasons, a work was ordered to be closed to further admissions (*e. g.*, as sanctioned in Famine Secretary's letter No. F-180, dated the 22nd January 1900). The answer to the other two questions is in the negative.

Q. 25 and 26.—See paragraph 7 of Famine Circular No. F-26, dated 6th October 1899. Theoretically there was at least a quasi-subordination in all but purely professional matters. Practically, while orders given by the Civil authorities were not allowed to be questioned, they were in fact very sparingly given. Very special tact had to be exercised, and friction was not entirely unknown. The system of dual control worked unsatisfactorily in many ways. The inconvenience and confusion were accentuated by the prevalence of a similar system within the Public Works Department itself. Subordinate to the Executive Engineer were two parallel lines of officials, on the one hand the Sub-Divisional Officers and Section Officers, on the other the Famine Works Superintendents and their Assistants. The relations to one another of these two sets of officials was never very clearly defined; neither of them was theoretically subordinate to the other: their functions seemed to be continually overlapping; but all alike were empowered to issue orders to the Officers-in-charge.

The Officers-in-charge were in so far civil officers that they were selected and appointed by the Commissioner. They were by him deputed under the immediate orders of the Public Works Department. They were in practice held personally responsible for every detail, professional or otherwise, connected with the charge. Their position was in many ways an unsatisfactory one, owing to the number of masters whom under the arrangements above described, they were expected to serve, and the multiplicity of often conflicting orders they were in the habit of receiving. It was particularly so in view of the fact that several of the temporarily appointed Public Works Department staff to whom they were subordinated proved to be persons of very inferior character and capacity. The Officers-in-charge had full authority in respect of all the matters mentioned at the end of paragraph 426 of the Report of the Famine Commission of 1898, and indeed of many other matters; but they were liable to continual interference at the hands of the subordinate supervising staff referred to.

My experience of two famines has strongly convinced me of the supreme importance of making the Deputy Commissioners *directly* responsible for every branch of famine administration in his district, and giving him direct and absolute authority over every individual employed therein. It may be taken that the Executive Engineer will not willingly accept a position of absolute personal subordination to the Deputy Commissioner, and that any attempt to enforce such a position, even if thought otherwise desirable, would only tend to misunderstandings and obstruction to work. The alternative seems to be to eliminate the Public Works Department altogether from actual administrative work in connection with famine.

The Executive Engineer would find plenty of employment as professional adviser to the District Officers. He might with great advantage inspect relief-works from an engineering point of view just as the Civil Surgeon does from a medical and sanitary point of view. He and his staff would of course be responsible for laying out work and directing its progress; and his opinion on all questions of tasks and the like would be most valuable. But he should have no relations with the actual relief-workers.

I see no reason why with such professional assistance, the Deputy Commissioner should not undertake altogether the *administration* of even the largest relief-works. Many large works have in fact been successfully managed by Civil agency in this famine. And, taking the aggregate of workers in a district, the Civil Officers have in a fact coped with far larger numbers than the Public Works Department, and in my opinion with more satisfactory results. Such of the Public Works Department staff as could in time of famine be spared from strictly professional duties might well be deputed, like officers from other departments, to the Civil Department for employment on famine duty. Assistant Engineers could with great advantage be employed as Civil "Charge Officers," while Public Works Department subordinates, under the control of the Deputy Commissioner and his superior Famine Assistants should make admirable Officers in charge of individual works. The duties of the Famine Works Superintendent would thus be merged in those of the Civil "Charge Officers." The arrangement might involve smaller and more numerous civil charges and a larger Civil Famine Staff; but this would be more economical than the present system of entertaining two separate famine establishments in the Civil and Public Works Departments.

Q. 29. and 30.—See Circular letter No. F-41, dated the 22nd January 1900. I should have personally preferred a slight further reduction in the wage scale. This would of course have tended to economy. In the interests of simplicity, I am not in favour of separate classification and wages for women. I think that two classes for able-bodied adults are sufficient. Very roughly speaking, Class I should be for men, Class II for women. But men of inferior physique may also be included in the women's class.

Q. 31 and 32.—The “intermediate” system was in force throughout on all Public Works Department works. Payment-by-results was allowed only on village works and in the Feudatory States. Personally I believe in the latter system. I would answer the second question in No. 32 in the affirmative, subject to the understanding that adequate precautions are taken to provide for the weakly.

Q. 35.—See paragraph 32 of Public Works Department General Order No 287—7630-F and paragraph 12 of Famine Circular F-41, dated the 22nd January 1900. The arrangements herein described worked well, and I would repeat them.

Q. 40.—The head of the gang; but it is most important that he should be in fact the nominee of the gang, possessing their confidence and liable to deposition by them if he does anything to forfeit it, and not a petty official with authority to tyrannize over them. This principle was not sufficiently kept in view by all officers, and might with advantage be emphasized in any general orders.

Q. 48.—The actual fixation of tasks was left entirely to the Executive Engineer. But instructions to stiffen or relax tasks were from time to time issued by the Commissioner or a Deputy Commissioner. Orders of a general character were usually issued by the Commissioner.

A Deputy Commissioner finding it necessary to give such orders without previous reference, would be expected to report his action promptly. Wages were calculated automatically by the local Public Works Department officials according to the prescribed grain-rate, the fixing of which was at first left to Deputy Commissioners under the control of the Commissioner, but afterwards kept in the Commissioner's own hands. From the first the Commissioner alone had power to depart from the actual prevailing market-rate of grain, (paragraphs 4 and 5 of Circular letter F-1, dated the 14th August 1899, subsequently modified by paragraph 11 of F-41, dated the 22nd January 1900). All orders of any importance issued by me were invariably reported for information. I had occasionally, in cases of emergency, to anticipate sanction in matters to which sanction was necessary. I cannot recall a single instance in which my action was overruled. And I desire to take the opportunity afforded me by this question of recording my respectful and grateful acknowledgments of the unfailing support which I received from the Chief Commissioner throughout the famine.

Q. 51.—This was done with some success in the early days of the famine, with the object of keeping Public Works Department charges down to the prescribed limit of “5,000 or at the most 6,000.” I do not remember its being attempted afterwards.

Q. 52 and 53.—They were originally intended to serve as stop-gaps only, pending the organization by the Public Works Department of large public works. They eventually came to play a most important independent part. They consisted almost entirely of small village tanks.

Q. 54 to 56.—Will doubtless be answered in detail by Deputy Commissioners.

Q. 57.—Yes.

Q. 58.—The former were invariably found to be the more popular.

Q. 59.—I am in favour of extending them to the fullest extent possible. Under the conditions enforced they were not found to be unduly popular; they were far less so than the large public works; they lent themselves to a system of admission by selection; and lastly they resulted in the production of much permanently useful works at exceedingly cheap rates.

Q. 68.—Dependants, *as such*, were relieved solely with cooked food.

Q. 69. *Kitchens*.—The grounds are that (a) this form of gratuitous relief is the most economical, (b) it goes direct into the stomach of the particular individual, and there is no fear, as with cash doles, of its being squandered or reaching the wrong hands, (c) it is in some measure a test of actual distress, though a test, which is no doubt weakened with use, (d) it has been found to involve the least danger of speculation. At the beginning of the famine, it was generally believed that, though kitchens were an excellent institution for children, the test was too severe for adults, at least if they had any caste ~~was~~ considering. Experience in the Feudatory States (where economy in the administration of relief was a paramount consideration), and in the Sambalpur District where kitchens were opened as a test before any cash relief was sanctioned, soon taught otherwise; and steps were taken to transfer adults as far as practicable and safe, from the cash relief lists to kitchens, even in tracts where cash relief was already being administered. These measures proved generally successful. In any future famine in Chhattisgarh I would unhesitatingly recommend kitchens as the first form of relief to be opened.



Q. 70.—Not until the rains, when kitchens were temporarily thrown open.

Q. 71 and 72.—Five in all in the Division. Raipur was opened in November 1899, Dhamtari in February 1900, Bilaspur, Sambalpur and Sihawa in the rains. The highest figures ever reached were 325 at Dhamtari in February, and 354 at Bilaspur in September. They were used solely as depôts, not as places of punishment.

Q. 73.—Yes.

Q. 74.—The idea was 3 miles before, 2 miles, after the rains broke.

Q. 76.—None. The Public Works Department kitchen sometimes performed the functions of a civil kitchen (paragraph 92 of Public Works Department General Order).

Q. 77.—See answer to Question 70. Until the rains, selection was precisely as for gratuitous cash relief. Even when admission was free in the rains, Charge Officers were encouraged to refuse, and did refuse, those whom they *knew* to be well-to-do.

Q. 75 and 76.—See Village Relief Rules attached to Circular letter No. F-3, dated the 14th August 1899.

Q. 77.—To village kotwals and their families under orders contained in Secretariat letter No. F-343, dated the 16th October 1899, to Commissioner, Nagpur Division.

Q. 78.—Chiefly Raots and Brahmins; also special cooks for special castes; in some parts Chamars. The object at first was to popularize kitchens. When this had been sufficiently accomplished, some of the special cooks, *e. g.*, Chamars, were dispensed with.

Q. 80 and 81.—There were no such shops.

Q. 87.—It is difficult to answer this question, beyond saying that the experience of this famine suggests a modification of the 15 per cent. doctrine.

Q. 88.—Numbers on Public Works Department relief-works were excessive in January 1900. I was led to believe this by information as to the circumstances of some of the people found there. It was *prima facie* probable, as wages were high, owing to the rigidity of the orders then in force, both as to the grain equivalents to be allowed and grain rates to be adopted, while tasks were inadequate owing to the insufficiency of Public Works Department staff. The incapacity of the Public Works Department to cope with the numbers flocking to their works naturally led to still further increased numbers. The case was dealt with in Secretariat letter No. F-180, dated the 22nd January 1900.

Again numbers on kitchens were excessive during the rains, particularly in the Raipur District, before the issue of Famine Circular No. 53, dated the 14th August 1900. Numbers of persons were relieved who can scarcely be said to have been in any danger of dying of starvation. On the other hand, practically the whole of the able-bodied population so relieved was employed in field labour, and there can be no question that the liberality of this relief so afforded has resulted in a far more complete harvest than could otherwise have been looked for.

The rule of free admission to kitchens during the rains was deliberately adopted as a safeguard against the undoubted danger of serious distress at a time when relief-works were to be closed, and a consequent increase in the mortality. It was taken advantage of to a far greater extent than was at all contemplated at the time when the programme was drawn up. But even so, and even with my present experience of the readiness of the Raipur Chamar population to accept such relief, I am of opinion that a somewhat similar rule ought to be adopted again under similar circumstances. But I would attach to it certain reservations, and I would provide for its being promptly modified the moment it appeared safe to do so.

Q. 90.—Yes. The people require a certain amount of educating up to acceptance of relief. They came on far more readily in those parts which had suffered severely in 1896-97 than elsewhere.

Q. 92 and 93.—I think it would be dangerous not to accept the labour-test as a sufficient proof of distress. But it must be properly applied, and must be made a real test. In this respect I am of opinion that a very large discretion should be left to the responsible local officers, who should have a very free hand in the adjustment of wages, tasks, and conditions of work generally. They must of course be held responsible for carefully watching the physical condition of the people. So long as this is satisfactory, it may fairly be assumed that tests are not too severe; and if at the same time the numbers seeking



relief appear to be unduly large, the local officer should be in a position to experiment cautiously in the direction of stiffening them. On the other hand, the moment signs of deterioration are observed, the tests should, if in excess of the normal standard laid down, be promptly relaxed.

So far as wages are concerned, I think that the powers given to Commissioners in this famine are sufficient. They are certainly not excessive. In the matter of tasks, orders were from time to time issued; but I was not satisfied with the way in which detailed effect was given to those orders by the Public Works Department. On works under civil agency there was no difficulty whatever. Admissions to small village works should be wholly by selection made after personal local enquiry. Lists should be maintained for each village both of persons selected for admission to such works, and of those ascertained to be in good circumstances and consequently in no need of relief. Doubtful cases could be referred to the large public works for relief. Care must at the same time be taken so to adjust conditions on public works as not to allow them to be more attractive than village works. On large public works I consider the only safe rule to be that admission is *prima facie* open to all who will submit to the prescribed labour test. But persons whose names are on the "well-to-do list" above described should be excluded, so far as it is possible to detect them. Detection should be comparatively easy on works at all near their villages, and this in itself would necessitate their submitting to a distance test before they would hope to be admitted to relief.

Such arrangements could be worked with far more confidence of success, if all works, large and small, were under the same administrative agency.

Gratuitous relief should ordinarily be given entirely by selection. The test of acceptance of cooked food is a useful one, but is apt to lose its force as time goes on.

Q. 95.—It is only in Sambalpur that statistics have shown a very high mortality, which has been the subject of special report. The evidence goes to show that (a) the statistics are incorrect, the population being far larger than that assumed as the basis of calculation, (b) cholera is responsible for a far larger share of the mortality than has been returned under it, (c) the season was in other respects an extraordinarily unhealthy one, (d) exposure has been responsible for more sickness than privation. It cannot be questioned that some of the increased mortality is attributable to diseases connected with unsuitable or insufficient food; but this is not in my opinion the case to a very great extent.

Q. 96.—The year was one of exceptionally scanty, which necessarily implies impure water-supply; and to this may be attributed the abnormal and universal prevalence of cholera. From the first measures were taken all over the country to dam up running streams and sink kutcha wells. Wherever cholera appeared, special action was taken by the local relief officers to guard the sources of supply from pollution; and permanganate of potash was freely used. The rapidity with which, in many parts of the Division, cholera was stamped out was almost as marked a feature of the year as its general prevalence.

Q. 100 and 101.—There was no appreciable immigration except into the Sambalpur District. Complaints were occasionally received from other parts of the Division; but on investigation they always proved to be exaggerated. Mortality in Sambalpur consisted very largely of immigrants. There are no sufficient data to state definitely in what proportion.

Q. 102.—With very few exceptions, orphans have been taken over by friends or caste-people.

Q. 105.—Special enquiries were made, but no complaints were elicited.

Q. 108.—The Central Provinces Famine Code has not been revised since the last famine, and is admittedly out of date. We worked on the lines of the Famine Commission Report of 1898. I can recall no departure from this beyond the slight modification already referred to, of the grain equivalents on which wages were calculated.

Q. 109.—A considerable number of Commissioned Officers, both British and Native, of the Native Army, and Non-Commissioned Officers of both armies, were employed in this Division. They did splendid work, and were the most valuable of all agencies supplementary to the permanent district establishments. We had also officials deputed from various civil departments, and a number of temporarily appointed outsiders. I can suggest no other source, except that I would not draw the line at Staff Corps Officers. I would welcome any Military Officer possessing a little experience of the country and a fair working knowledge of the vernacular. The qualities which have been most prominently displayed by our Military famine officials of all ranks are discipline, powers of organization and resource. They are precisely what are most needed for famine work.

Q. 110.—Missionaries of all denominations in this Division have volunteered their services as unpaid assistants in the official scheme of relief. They have undertaken the detailed supervision of poor-houses, kitchens, and village works, and in some cases the entire administration of relief, as Honorary Charge Officers in groups of villages. Their services have been invaluable. Several native landholders also have done admirable service as Honorary Charge Officers. Deputy Commissioners have welcomed all such assistance that was available; and this being so I cannot say that there is scope for extension of the system. Capable and zealous non-official volunteers are naturally not numerous; but wherever they exist I am of opinion that they should in every possible way be encouraged.

The above remarks take no account of the administration of the Charitable Relief Fund in which most valuable public service has been rendered by unpaid non-official agency, or of private relief.

A. D. YOUNGHUSBAND,

*Commissioner,*

*Chhattisgarh Division.*

RAIPUR :

*The 5th January 1901.*

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL J. L. POYNDR, I.M.S., CIVIL SURGEON, RAIPUR.

*Mr. Bourdillon.*—You are the Civil Surgeon of Raipur?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—About the mortality in your district was it very much as usual?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Towards the end of the season it rose?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—What was that chiefly due to?

*A.*—A good deal of that was due to cholera.

*Q.*—Not on the works?

*A.*—No, there was not much cholera on the works.

*Q.*—You think the scale of wages was enough?

*A.*—I can only form an opinion in a very indefinite sort of way from what I hear. I heard people managed to save when they were in a family.

*Q.*—As a medical officer, from your experience, what do you think of the scale of wages—15 *chhatáks* for a woman and 19 *chhatáks* for a man?

*A.*—I think that is quite sufficient.

*Q.*—You were constantly on inspection duty?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Was it an easy task to maintain proper sanitary regulations in the kitchens?

*A.*—No, I mean to say the kitchen people were not resident kitchen people except on the works; and the sanitation was looked after.

*Q.*—Sanitation has a special meaning, did you see that the water-supply was clean?

*A.*—Do you mean in the kitchens; it is almost impossible to do anything to regulate the sanitation in the general kitchens.

*Q.*—One witness has given us a lamentable account of the flies and the dirt there?

*A.*—We find flies sometimes.

*Q.*—Did the flies contribute to the dissemination of cholera?

*A.*—I do not think so.

*Q.*—Have there been complaints with regard to the food at kitchens?

*A.*—We had several complaints.



Q. 1.—The outlook was favourable, but depended on good rainfall. The previous two harvests had been good.

Q. 14.—Irrigation wells can be made in many parts of the district. The sub-soil water is only a few feet below the surface at the end of the rains. And such wells are used to some extent, but not very much.

Q. 32.—I am of opinion that when relief is started in time a system of payment-by-results will afford adequate relief in the case of all able-bodied people, but when actual distress has affected the health of the people that it cannot be relied upon.

Q. 34.—The scale of wages was, I think, rather more than adequate, and in cases where there were several people in a family, some saving was effected; of this latter assertion, I have no direct proof, but I have been told so by some of the Missionary workers who know the people well. I am led to this conclusion also because I heard very little grumbling on the works, and where the workers chose to earn their full wages they were in good condition. The people would leave a work and travel considerable distances to go to another work where the work was said to be lighter or fines were not imposed too rigidly, and they could hardly have done this had they not managed to save a little to travel on. I also heard the Railway Engineers complain that they could not get sufficient coolies to work on the line, though they offered considerably more pay than they could earn on famine work.

Q. 43.—The practice of paying weakly people a very low wage for little work is in my opinion not economical. They gradually deteriorate and get sick. People not able to earn a sufficient wage should, I think, be relieved in some different manner—such as receiving full rations, which should not be allowed to be taken away.

Q. 47.—The following steps were taken for conservancy, water-supply and hospital arrangements on opening of a new camp.

*Water-supply.*—In the rather rare cases of a well water-supply, the well was disinfected with permanganate of potash, and a staff of water-drawers put on to draw the water for every one. It prevents any unauthorized persons drawing water with their own ropes and vessels. Piasos were established at the camp and on the work, at intervals, to supply water to every one. If water was insufficient and if found practicable to dig more wells they were accordingly dug.

Where water was obtained from nalas, the nala was bunded up and placed under guard. In some cases, where the rocky nature of the ground prevented the sinking of wells, moorum bunds were constructed either across a nalla or running into a tank. These were made around corrugated iron cylinders which acted as wells, while the surrounding moorum acted as a filter through which the water percolated either in case of nalas or tanks. When practicable wells were sunk. When the water-supply was drawn from a river, washing and bathing-ghats were appointed below the ghats from which drinking-water could be drawn.

As regards hospitals, a site was selected and the hospital built in accordance, as far as possible, with the authorized plan. In every case this was found to be quite insufficient, and not only had the original wards to be enlarged, but other sheds erected for the treatment of offensive and contagious cases—apart from the cholera huts which were always built at some distance from the camp; and huts for attendants and water-bearers were also built.

Q. 58.—Where large works existed the people left the smaller works to go to them.

Q. 59.—I think from my observation that extension of village works is extremely desirable for the following reasons:—

(a) The supervision of such work is under the malguzar working immediately under some Civil Officer who has considerable personal experience of natives; and the expenditure on establishment is therefore saved.

(b) The people are near or in their own villages and are consequently better sheltered, and expenditure of buildings and shelters largely avoided.

(c) They use their own tools and more expenditure is saved.

(d) Material benefit accrues to the villages, and the workers grasp that the work will be directly beneficial to themselves; they therefore may be expected to work more willingly.

(e) I am of opinion that a much larger proportion of money spent actually reaches the people whom it is desired to relieve, and that with a given sum of money, much larger numbers of people can actually be relieved.

(f) The people are on the spot directly cultivation commences; whereas it is very difficult to make them leave the larger works to go to their villages.

Q. 90.—The people came on relief more readily than in 1897. I attribute this principally to the fact that they are more accustomed to the idea, and they could save whatever they had of their own by coming on to relief early.

Q. 94.—The births and deaths were reported to the police posts and registered in the usual way.

A death return is also received from the camp direct, and in the case of epidemic disease a special report is submitted.

Q. 95.—There can be no doubt, especially in the jungly tracts, that the people eat many leaves and roots which they do not ordinarily use, and that this often produces violent diarrhoea.

Q. 96.—I think there can be no doubt that the cholera epidemic was in many cases due to contaminated water-supply. Wells were freely dug, but not always in sufficient quantities, and in several camps sufficient attention was not made to deepening them or the water-level fell, nor were the tanks or wells sufficiently guarded, nor was sufficient attention paid to supply pure water to the people even when it was available, or to prevent them from using water from unguarded tanks or water-sources which had become contaminated.

Permanganate of potash was used freely when cholera was prevalent; it was put in the water every second or third day, but in some cases it was used injudiciously and in too large quantities, destroying all animal life and converted the water into a thick, unpleasant-looking drink. It requires to be used with discretion, and when used needlessly is calculated, I think, to do harm.

Q. 97.—Sanitary arrangements for camp consisted of putting up flags at the regulation distances around the camp for people to go beyond for purposes of nature.

The camp areas were in many cases most insufficiently looked after. The number of guards was much too low. I am of opinion that the trench system could be used without much difficulty, and would considerably improve the sanitary condition of the camps. There was also a staff of sweepers to attend to the cleanliness of the camps.

At poor-houses latrines were constructed and worked on the dry-earth system.

At the kitchens no special sanitary accommodation was afforded as the people do not live in them. Burying-grounds were marked out at some distance from the camp, and deep graves dug in readiness, and trenching grounds for burying rubbish and filth were also got ready. Supervision of sanitation was immediately under the Officer-in-charge, assisted by the Hospital Assistant in medical charge: they were frequently inspected by the special Inspecting Medical Officer.

Q. 98.—The inspection of the grain supplied was also under the Officers-in-charge, assisted by the Hospital Assistant, and samples and reports were frequently sent in when the grain was found of bad quality and the sale stopped.

JOHN L. POYNTER, LIEUT.-COL., I. M. S.,

RAIPUR:

The 4th January 1901. }

Civil Surgeon,

Raipur.

MR. AMRIT RAO, MĀLGUZAR.  
(In Hindustani.)

*The President.*—How much does an acre produce?

*A.*—An acre and-a-half takes one candy of rice seed, one candy being equal to twenty *katas* of four seers and nine *chhataks* each.

*Q.*—What is the yield of one candy of rice seed in an acre and-a-half?

*A.*—The yield would be about from fifteen to twenty candies of unhusked rice in a good year. In an acre and-a-half the produce amounts to about thirty-four maunds eight seers and 12 *chhataks*?

*Q.*—Then in one acre you get twenty-two maunds thirty-two seers and eight *chhataks* of unhusked rice?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—How much does that give of husked rice?

*A.*—Ten maunds of husked rice.

*Q.*—What would be its value?

*A.*—Twenty-five rupees.

*Q.*—Now as to *kodon*. What quantity of seed do you require for an acre and-a-half?

*A.*—Two *katas*.

*Q.*—How much will they yield?

*A.*—They will yield from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 candies of unhusked *kodon*.

*Q.*—How much is that per acre?

*A.*—Between one and two candies of unhusked *kodon*, that is five maunds at the outside.

*Q.*—How much is that equal to of husked *kodon*?

*A.*—Two and-a-half maunds of husked *kodon*.

*Q.*—What rent do you take for *arhar*?

*A.*—One rupee for an acre and-a-half.

*Q.*—And per acre?

*A.*—Ten annas. *Arhar* is often grown intermixed with *kodon*.

*Q.*—How much do you pay to Government out of your rent?

*A.*—On an average, 60 per cent.

*Q.*—If you got 10 annas with a gross produce of Rs. 25, then for a produce of Rs. 100 you get Rs. 2-8-0 from your tenants?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—And you pay 60 per cent. of that to Government?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Then the revenue is not more than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on gross produce and the pressure on the *rayat* of the Government revenue is insignificant?

*A.*—Yes.





Q. 52.—In the part of the district where I reside, *i. e.*, Nawagarh Circle of the Mungeli Tahsil, small village works in charge of the malguzars, and in some cases even in charge of big and respectable tenants, were the mainstay or rather the only sort of relief granted in return for labour. Relief works were started in Nawagarh Charge by opening small village works under the supervision of the respectable malguzars who were in fact deeply interested in their execution—doubly: Firstly, as it supported their ryots and saved their villages from depopulation, and secondly, as their own villages were improved in respect of productiveness and counteracted to a great extent the force of future famine.

The success with which these works were managed in my charge precluded every necessity to have recourse to any large Public Works Department camp, and there was, in fact, no Public Works Department camp in my charge. Still I can say with every certainty that the people did not suffer the least for want of it. Many a time I had occasion to go through relief camps, and it interested me to ask the residing place of the workers, but seldom did I find men from my side of the tahsil.

During the dry weather these works could go on smoothly and with full force, and during this interval kitchens served but little purpose. It was when the rains had set in with full force that the village works were found impossible to be pushed on with, and then, and then only, the multiplication of a number of the kitchens was found necessary. In short, I should say that the village works played the main part during the famine.

Q. 53.—After the famine was over I had occasion to go to different parts of the district and talk with men of my profession. I thus gathered from the people that construction of new tanks and repairs to old ones were the main class of works undertaken. My charge differed in this respect from other charges very much, and profitably too. In my charge construction of big bandhs, extensive bandhias, large bahras for rice plantation, and pushing aside mischievous rivulets, and digging tangar into gabhar fields, were the works that were scattered over the entire charge.

Q. 54.—(a) No village work was given under the Public Works Department, though it was once proposed that some should be so given. In other charges some works were given under the Public Works Department, but the experience of other charges deterred Mr. Low from giving any work from my charge to the Public Works Department.

(b) (i) No work was managed directly so far as known to me by the Government. My brother malguzars in the Mungeli Tahsil are proud that they could manage the works at least as efficiently as any professional men would have done.

(b) (ii). Almost all the village works, at least the greatest number of them, was managed solely through the malguzars.

Q. 55 (a).—No work was started without the Charge Officer being present on the spot. He would lay down the outlines generally in the form of an oblong with the aid of the patwari's charkhi, and would show the way how to dagbell the spot. The entire spot was dagbelled in the above manner, so that many small oblongs were formed in the bigger one as outlined by the Charge Officer. The content of every small oblong was 70 cft. or, to use the popular language, one dagni.

Applicants for work were set in a line in the order in which they came. None was given less than one dagni.

(b) This was a very simple thing, every small oblong measured one dagni. To count the pits meant to measure the work. If a man could show that he excavated the earth of two small oblongs he was thought to have dug two dagnis.

(c) Wages were paid by results and were paid to the headman of the group that dug the pit. The headman was determined by the applicants themselves before the work was shown to them. The name of the headman alone was entered in the roll, and the wages paid for the work done by his group was entered against his single name. No payment was made for any work measuring less than a dagni. If a man dug only half a dagni and refused to do the rest, it was completed by others. The entire dagni and its wages were entered against the name of the former only, but the wages were paid to both the persons proportionately to the amount of work done by each. Of course remark to the above effect was made in the payment register. If any man of the group complained that

his headman did not pay him his proper wages, the work of each one of the group, including that of the headman himself, was separately measured and the proper wages were distributed to each in the presence of the managers, *i.e.*, malguzars. I must explain here that these groups consisted generally of the members of a single family or of persons quite on friendly terms with one another. It was not necessary that if a man worked he should work in a group. Groups were formed only so far as it could be done without any danger of confusion. Thus the disputes for non-payment by the headman were very rare.

The malguzars in charge of the village works were responsible for the due disbursement of the wages proportionate to the work done by each. If at the final measurement the work measured short, the malguzar was to make up the amount. He was responsible for keeping a correct account of work done and wages paid.

He was to submit the periodical returns in time. He had to execute a bond to bind himself for the above things. In default he was bound to return the amount to be fixed by the Deputy Commissioner in each case.

Administratively he had to lay down the work and set the workers in proper order. Though not obligatory, he was to arrange for grain sellers to supply the coolies and to arrange for water-supply.

In cases where muharrirs were supplied by Government, the malguzar was responsible only for the amount drawn by the muharrir from him. The general supervision rested with the malguzars. The Circle Officer and the Charge Officer were the checking and directing agencies.

Q. 56.—Being ignorant of what the Code task system means, I cannot say anything on the point. As regards the scale of the wages—they were paid by results—so many dagnis for a rupee. The rate varied between 8 dagnis per rupee and 3 dagnis per rupee according to the nature of the soil excavated. Under the above rate, average earnings per head scarcely ever higher than Re. 0-1-3.

The village works were never opened to free admission. It was restricted to those who were enrolled on the list showing the names of the able-bodied but poor. I may be allowed to note here that the residents of every village were divided in two classes, first, those needing Government relief, (2) those who could do without it.

The first class was again sub-divided into:—

- (a) Fit for gratuitous relief.
- (b) Fit for relief in return for labour.

The three classes of the people were enrolled on three separate lists prepared for every village in October 1899, previous to the distribution of relief in Nawagarh Charge. I do not know for certain if these lists were prepared for other charges also.

These lists were subject to constant alteration. In Nawagarh Charge a certain number of villages was attached to every work. The malguzar was to admit applicants from those villages only. Before admitting them the malguzar was to satisfy himself that they were enrolled on the list headed "Poor but able-bodied." In doubtful cases he was to refer the matter to the Circle Officers or the Halka Officer whoever was nearer than the other at the time.

Q. 57.—So far as known to me no system<sup>d</sup> was introduced only for the sake of the experiment.

Q. 58.—As already stated elsewhere, no work under the Public Works Department enlisted in my charge enabled me to compare the popularity of public work with village work. However, I can say that village works were more popular than Public Works for the reasons given below:—

I. Men from villages in the vicinity of works under me return from Public Works.

II. On the road from Mungeli to Pandaria there was a Public Works Department camp at Baghamunda. There was a village work at Mungeli under my brother, and another at Baghamunda itself under the malguzar thereof. Both these works were full when there were but few workers on the Public Works Department Camp at Baghamunda. If I remember correctly the Charge Officer was asked by the Deputy Commissioner to enquire and report if there was anything wrong in the management of the camp. The Charge Officer made some efforts to fill up the camp.

Q. 59.—I am decidedly of opinion that village works are more desirable than large Public Works Department work for the reasons stated below:—

- (1) Village works mostly tend to secure the productiveness of the soil, and thus may counteract famine to a certain extent.

- (2) They do not require special establishment as the Public Works Department works do.
- (3) The workers find labour at their door and are saved the dangers arising out of departure from home. Experience shows that after famine those that worked on village works could resume their occupation better and more easily than those that worked on roads.
- (4) Village works are more economical than works under Public Works Department.
- (5) A man is better known near his village than abroad ; on Public Works Department work any man's fitness for relief can be tested less effectually than on village works.
- (6) Collecting of large numbers on relief camps tends to demoralise the people and to loosen their social ties. It introduces them to emigration which in case of tenants means leaving their property and beginning a new life.
- (7) The village works being under malguzars the people think that there malguzar has supported them and thus they grow cordial to the malguzar.
- (8) Physical conditions of the people on village works has reason to be much better than that of those on relief camps. A man can manage his diet with a given amount at home much better than with the same amount abroad.
- (9) The expenditure under tools and other contingencies and that under hutting is *nil* on village works which is very high on relief camps.

In short I should say that from a physical, moral and financial point of view village works are more desirable than relief camps. The relief camps no doubt are most useful for houseless labourers, and only a limited number of camps should therefore be opened.

Q. 60.—Strictly speaking I had no experience of this class as such. The only sort of this class with whom I had occasion to deal was the Gonds known as Urias and Pahalwans. They had no hesitation to come to our village works. They made huts on our works and liked to live there with their family.

Q. 61.—No such works were ever seen by me. They were heard of in Lormi forest, but I had no occasion to visit those parts.

Q. 62.—During the rains kitchens were opened to free admission, and able-bodied persons were allowed. From these persons work was exacted, but it was generally in connection with kitchens themselves. I did not see any work of private utility done by those on relief. When there was a scarcity of coolies at the weeding season the malguzar would request for gangs from the Public Works Department and would pay for them, but this was done only in rare cases and with not much good to the malguzars.

Q. 63.—Yes, Koshti relief centres were selected and "*shathias*" were appointed to supply thread to the destitute weavers of fine web. Charge Officers had furnished the shathias with a list of likely persons, and also the amount of thread to be issued to each family every week. Wages were paid to the weavers 4 annas per "*than*." For other class of artisans no special measures were introduced.

Q. 64.—Socially it is degrading to a "*Koshta*" to work at Public Works. They therefore showed greatest reluctance to have recourse to Public Works. They went to relief camps or village works only when they saw that any more obstinacy would result in starvation. Before Koshti relief centres were started some had gone to village works and relief camps too ; but my experience showed that the outturn of work done by them was generally very short and their physical condition seemed to be deteriorating.

Q. 65.—The relief measures to relieve the poor weavers were, so far as I can judge, quite successful and economical too. The average earning per head was no more than 9½ pies of the Koshtis receiving thread from me. Under the system prevalent in my charge the "*shathia*" was only an agency through whom thread was given to the weavers. He was responsible in other matters only to obey the Charge Officer. Persons for this relief were selected and the kind and number of cloth with the quantity of thread to be issued to each family and several other things were under the direct control of the Charge Officer. To me it appeared that this relief was solely under official management. The only work that the "*shathia*" did was to accumulate thread. This work cannot be done more effectually and economically by official agency.

Q. 66.—There was not a strict fodder famine, at least in Mungeli tahsil, and no such operations were found necessary.

Q. 67.—I don't know much on the point, but I heard that there were grass depôts towards Lormi jungles.

Q. 68.—(a) I have no experience as regards dependants on public works.

(b) Every effort was made to point out kitchen for every village work and the dependants of workers on village works got meals in the kitchens, but only so many of them were admitted as were thought too much for the wages of their guardians.

Q. 69.—I have no figures with me to compare any sort of relief with the other, but from my local knowledge I can safely say that during the dry season relief under village works was most extensive; during the rains village works closed and then relief at kitchens in the form of cooked food was the uppermost. This was chosen for the grounds given below:—

I.—Only those in utter need of relief accepted cooked food.

II.—Destitute mothers and guardians ate up the portion of their children's and starved them. Kitchens prevented this.

III.—But for kitchens the conditions of dhan produce would have been very different from the present one. The poor tenants having had not to work for their daily bread, could find ample time to look to their fields, otherwise weeding operations would have been much neglected.

Q. 70.—I do not know what classes are mentioned in the report referred to. What I can say is that gratuitous relief was given only to the following classes:—

(1) Bodily infirm.

(2) Unfit for work owing to smallness or oldness of age.

(3) Unfit for work owing to pregnancy or baby in arm, or for being the mother of many children.

Underlying each of the above three classes was the condition that besides Government relief there is no other means for their support. The above facts were elicited by the Charge and Circle Officers by making personal enquiries for each individual on the spot.

Q. 71.—I think there was only one poor-house in the district and that at Bilaspur.

I do not know anything in the matter for certain. I do not know about the entire district, but in Nawagarh charge there were only 14 kitchens before the rains, but after the rains set in there were as many as 55 kitchens so far as I can remember.

During the dry season two and half miles radius was served by each. In places where passage was difficult owing to brooks and other reasons, there were found several kitchens within one mile during the rains. Rice and dal were cooked together so as to form "*khitchri*." The meals were distributed only once a day between the hours of 10 to 12 A. M. People were required to eat the food on the spot and were allowed in no case to take the food to their homes.

Q. 76.—I do not know if any limit was fixed, but so far as I can recollect I did not ever see a kitchen near a relief-camp.

Q. 77.—During the rains admission to kitchens was quite free. However, well-to-do persons or their dependants, were not allowed in kitchens even at that time.

From towards the end of September further and before June admissions were restricted. Method for selection was the same as that detailed under question 70. All those fit for gratuitous relief were ordered to go to kitchens, but only such of those who were thought entitled to relief in cash as were unable to walk to a kitchen owing to bodily infirmity or any other sufficient cause or after enquiry about whom the Charge Officer or Circle Officer was satisfied that he will rather undergo any privation than take meals at a kitchen.

Q. 74.(a).—I do not know about that.

Q. 74.(b).—These lists were drawn up by Circle Officers and were checked by Tank Officer and Charge Officer. The recipients were inspected by Circle Officers generally twice in a month, and once in a month by the Charge Officer during the dry season. During the rains the Circle Officer could not inspect the paupers more than once in a month, and the Charge Officer once in two months. In other parts they might be inspecting more often, but in Nawagarh, where it is very difficult to move about during the rains, the inspections were made as I have stated already.

Q. 74-(c).—In some cases the payments were made in cash once in a month by the Revenue Inspectors themselves. In other cases, *e. g.*, in Nawagarh charge the amounts were disbursed through the "Distributors" previously selected from the class of respectable mukaddams.

At the end of every month they were gathered at some selected centres. In this manner the money reached the paupers at their houses within five days after the commencement of the month.

Q. 74-(d).—To none. In Nawagarh charge many able-bodied persons that would never have been given gratuitous relief receive it when a number of villages were flooded out. In Nawagarh charge many of those who lost much in flood and could not earn otherwise were given gratuitous relief. Some were given American maize and some were given cash doles for one month only.

Q. 74-(e).—Brahmans and Bairagis were the chief castes employed as cooks. Much reluctance was shown by the Satnamis at the beginning to take cooked food, but when the rains commenced they all yielded. Higher caste of the people, such as Brahmans and Rajputs, did not take cooked food at any time.

Q. 79.—Literate and respectable malguzars were appointed managers of the kitchens. Ration was fixed according to age. The management of kitchens and the proper distribution of food and account were frequently checked by the Circle Officers and Charge Officers on the spot by comparing the number on rolls with those present and by actually weighing the grain that was taken out for being cooked. The paupers were questioned on several other points to enquire into the honesty of the manager.

Q. 80 and 81.—I don't know of any such shops being opened.

Q. 82.—Entire land revenue for the year 1899-1900 was suspended.

Q. 83.—In the year 1899-1900 suspensions were made in my tahsil on the crop failure, so far as I can judge.

Q. 84.—Suspensions were determined before the collection commenced.

Q. 85.—I do not know anything on the point.

Q. 86.—I did not observe any such case. Land revenue was suspended throughout the tahsil.

Q. 87.—During the rains the people having nothing with them, and as the *sahukars* ceased lending money, were thrown on relief from Government. In fact rainy season is always a period of want for the tenants, and during famine it is the more so.

Q. 88.—The kitchens began to close earlier, *i. e.*, in October. At this time in my opinion the people were not better off than what they were in September. The people suffered to a certain extent in October for want of sufficient relief. In my opinion the kitchens should have been allowed in November too. By the beginning of December the crops are ready.

Q. 89.—At least 2 per cent. of the proprietary body fell on relief. If I remember correct, about five or six malguzars worked on village works under me. In general every sort of tenant was found on works. For want of figures I cannot give the extent.

Q. 90.—Yes. The reasons are as hereunder:—

- (1) Their social feelings were somewhat blunted by experience in the last famine.
- (2) They could find relief this year without having had to leave their homes.
- (3) Truly speaking the people had no resource left open them, except to accept Government relief.

Q. 91.—On the contrary people would not incline towards relief till they found that no resource was left open.

Q. 92 and 93.—I am unable to pass any judgment on this.

Q. 94.—The ordinary system of noting the births and deaths is Kotwar's work, who reports the matter to police stations.

Q. 95.—What I can say on the point is that I did not see any man suffering for want of food in this famine.

Q. 96.—The impure water-supply increased mortality so far as it raised cholera.

When water famine was apprehended, wells were sunk in the beds of the rivers and nalas and in the vicinity of village works. Permanganate of potash was distributed by the Charge Officers to the mukaddams to disinfect wells and other sources of water only once or twice in a fortnight.

Q. 97.—On village works and kitchens people had to return home every day, and no special sanitary arrangements were found necessary.

Q. 98.—There were no regular shops on the village works.

In the parts in which I had occasion to travel I did not see the people using wild products for food.

Q. 100.—There was not any great emigration from Native States, but on village works that were opened in villages skirting on the Kawardha State the people of the State crowded very much. They would return to their villages every day.

Q. 101.—I don't know.

Q. 102.—There were not found any orphans so far as known to me to raise any question of their disposal.

Q. 103.—None.

Q. 104.—No.

Q. 104-a.—I don't know.

Q. 105.—Yes. At the weeding season people were very much short of coolies. The people were attracted to relief camps on account of liberal wages.

Q. 106.—No remarkable change has taken place except that kodon was sown more extensively this year than in former years. A new sort of corn, *viz.*, juar, sowing has been introduced by the efforts of Mr. Low. People are attracted to it.

Q. 107.—Yes. The grain wages are prevailing. There is no tendency to substitute it for cash. Those cultivators who had no grain in famine paid cash wages, but it was only reluctantly.

The cash wages were proportionate to the highness of the price of the grain.

Q. 108 and 109.—I cannot give my opinion on these points.

Q. 110.—To what extent and manner the non-official agency was utilized has already been shown elsewhere. It would be ruinous to them if they were used any more than that.

Q. 111 and 112.—I am unable to do that.

BILASPUR :  
The 4th January 1901. }

AMRIT RAO,  
Malguzar.

RAO BAHÁDUR RAGHOB MAHADIK, HONORARY MAGISTRATE.

(In Hindustani.)

*The President.*—You are a *mālguzār* ?

A.—Yes ; I was also a charge officer.

Q.—You are *mālguzār* of how many villages ?

A.—Of twenty as proprietor and of four as sub-proprietor.

Q.—What rent do you get from your tenants ?

A.—One rupee per acre.

Q.—And what is the value of the gross produce per acre ?

A.—Rs. 15.

Q.—Out of Rs. 15 you take rent Re. 1, that means  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on the gross produce ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And as revenue you pay about 10 annas out of the rupee ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—So the revenue is little more than 4 per cent. of the gross produce ?

A.—Yes ; in the Nerbudda valley excepting the plateau districts it would represent from 4 to 6 per cent. of gross produce.

Q.—And in the plateau districts ?

A.—One or two per cent.

Q.—Is that Betul ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were there people in the poorhouses who ought not to be there ?

A.—On the public works there undoubtedly were some, as there was no restriction ; but on the village works there were no people who had no business to be there.

Q.—Were there any *mālguzárs* in your district who undertook to dig tanks ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were some of the tank works managed by the *mālguzárs* on behalf of the Government ?

A.—Yes ; I was a charge officer and dug forty-five tanks, on which Rs. 51,813 were expended.

Q.—Were they used ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you remit your rent to the tenants if Government remits the revenue ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Are the *rayats* greatly indebted ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How many ?

A.—Seven out of ten are indebted.

Q.—What interest does the *bania* charge ?

A.—Re. 1, Re. 1-4-0, Re. 1-8-0 and even Rs. 2 per cent. per mensem, i.e., 12 per cent. to 24 per cent.

Q.—Supposing 10 or 20 persons borrowed money on their joint and several responsibility, would they get it at a lower rate of interest ?

A.—The creditor or *sowcar* would not accept their joint responsibility, nor would the tenants enter into an agreement binding themselves jointly. But perhaps if they did they would be able to get money at a low rate of interest.

Q.—Is it the custom in your villages for tenants to band together to borrow money ?

A.—No.

Q.—Has Government ever given money on joint responsibility at a low rate of interest ?

A.—No, they have given *takāvi*.

Q.—There is no mutual trust on the part of the people ?

A.—Absolutely none.





Q. 1.—In 1897 the harvest was very good. In 1898 in Rajim pargana the yield was about 14 annas. When the rains commenced in 1899, the outlook was not at all gloomy. The cultivators had recovered from the effects of the famine year 1896, and there was sufficient stock of seed-grain and sufficient number of agricultural cattle.

Q. 2.—The kharif sowings were not below normal. I myself have cultivation in 25 villages and I know all the malguzars in my neighbourhood, and from what I saw myself and what I heard from my tenants and others, I say that the area sown was not below normal. No actual measurements were made by me, nor was the sowing of each field checked by me.

Q. 3.—The average rainfall of this district (Raipur) is 46.66 inches. In 1899, the rainfall was only 22.79 inches or less than half the average. The rains practically ceased on the 5th September 1899, when the total registered rainfall was 22.36 inches. The following table prepared from the *Central Provinces Gazette* will show the distribution of the rainfall from June to September 1899:—

				Average rainfall.	Rainfall in 1899.
June	...	...	...	11.83	4.08
July	...	...	...	28.88	10.90
August	...	...	...	38.94	19.75
September	...	...	...	44.88	22.79

Q. 4.—The total outturn of kharif crops in 1899 was about 1 anna or between 6 and 7 per cent. of the normal harvest.

Q. 5.—In Rajim pargana about 60 per cent. of the population are petty cultivators (including in this description the wives, children and other dependant relatives of actual cultivators), and about 30 per cent. are agricultural labourers (including their wives and children). The total percentage of the population who depend exclusively on agriculture is thus 90 per cent.

Q. 13.—No loans were issued in 1899. In May and June 1900 loans were advanced to cultivators to purchase seed-grain. Such advances were not made to malguzars. The loans carry interest at one per cent. per month and are recoverable by two instalments in 1902 and 1903. To indigent cultivators money was paid for seed-grain and cattle without any condition of repayment.

Q. 14.—Irrigation wells can be made in this district. The average depth of water below the surface in November is about 30 feet, but at the close of 1899 the depth was about 40 feet. No sums were spent in digging wells for (a) securing the crop on the ground or (b) as a permanent improvement, but some money was spent in digging wells partly (c) as a temporary measure to employ labour, but mainly (d) to secure an adequate supply of drinking water for men and cattle.

Q. 22.—I had under me 1 Circle Inspector, 1 Assistant Charge Officer, 1 muharir and 2 chaprasis. No hutting arrangements were made in my charge as the workers resided in the village where work was going on, or in neighbouring villages within easy access, from which they could easily attend every day. There was no necessity to make any special arrangements for conservancy or sanitation. Arrangements were made for water-supply. Wells were dug in some places and in other places earthen vessels were kept filled up with water for labourers. I had to make no arrangements for food supply. It was not found necessary to make any arrangement for medical supervision until kitchens were opened.

Q. 23.—Only indigent persons were admitted as labourers. Residence on the works was not compulsory, but the labourers usually went back to their homes every evening and came to the work every morning. There was no hard-and-fast distance test, but usually people residing within a radius of four or five miles used to come to the work.

Q. 24.—There were 44 villages in my charge, the total population being about 30,000. Out of these about 10,000 came to work under me, besides about 5,000 who were fed in the kitchen. About 10 or 12 thousand more were working on the roads under the supervision of the Public Works Department, with which I had no concern. Men from outside my charge (44 villages) used to come to the works, but I cannot definitely state their numbers. Usually applicants for relief had not to travel more than four or five miles, but a few came from longer distances.

Q. 26.—I was an Honorary Charge Officer and had no connection with the Public Works Department, excepting that when any people came to Public Works Department works from long distances, they used to send them to me, and I had to send them to some relief camp near their homes after paying them their travelling expenses.

The muharir used to measure the work daily and I used to check such measurements.

Q. 27.—It was left to my discretion to reduce the prescribed quantity of work if the earth was unusually hard.

Q. 28.—There were 30 or 32 men in each gang besides 1 mate for each gang. No special arrangements were made to secure village or family gangs.

Q. 30.—Men used to get 5 pice daily and women 4; children got 3 pice. I think there should be some difference in wages as men do more work and harder work than women.

Q. 33.—In my charge payment was made only by results. One gang consisting of 30 men were expected to do 1,000 cubic feet of excavation work daily in black soil, 700 cubic feet in medium soil, and 500 cubic feet in hard soil. When I found that the men could not do so much work I represented the matter to the Deputy Commissioner, who authorized me to reduce the quantities, *i. e.*, 800 cubic feet in black soil, 500 cubic feet in medium soil, and 400 cubic feet in hard soil. I was also given discretion to reduce these quantities if I found the work was too much for the men. No allowance was made for people coming from distant villages, as the distance was in no case more than five miles. Persons fit for light employment were engaged in separate gangs and were allowed to do as much work as they could. In their case the full quantity of work was not insisted upon. The task was reduced because it was found to be more than the labourers could complete after working whole day. The reduction was not due to any physical deterioration of the men.

Q. 34.—In my opinion the wages were inadequate. The ordinary scale of wages in villages is 2 annas for men and 6 pice for women. When food-grains are twice as dear, 6 pice for one man and 5 pice for one woman can hardly suffice for their food, specially when it is remembered that most of them have small children who do not earn anything. Where there were several adult members in the same family, no doubt they earned enough for one full meal every day, but even they could not get two meals as they usually get during prosperous years. It was not likely that workers saved anything out of their wages. Copper coins freely returned to the Banias, but not always to the Bania on the works, as many labourers purchased their supplies from Banias in their own villages. The rate of wages was never so high as to induce people to come to the works who are not in the habit of doing manual work.

Q. 35.—In my charge 1 anna was paid to each man and woman as rest-day wage. I do not think that the workers could earn more than the full wage by harder work. In fact I had to reduce the quantity of work as stated in reply to Question No. 33.

Q. 36.—In my charge there was no maximum or minimum wage. The wages paid were uniform as mentioned in reply to Question No. 30. No fines were imposed, but when, after more than one admonition, any gang persisted in doing less than the prescribed work, such of the gang as did not do full work were fined 1 or 2 pice by way of warning.

Q. 38.—Payment was usually made daily. Occasionally however when there was delay of a day or two in receipt of cash from head-quarters the Bania used to advance grain on credit to such of the workers as he knew, and to others grain was advanced on the security of the Officer-in-Charge, who paid the Bania on the arrival of the remittance from head-quarters.

Q. 39.—From the first, payment was made daily and this was done till the works were closed.

Q. 40.—Payment was usually made through the mate of each gang and such payments were verified by the muharir and Officer-in-charge.

Q. 43.—Children able to work were paid 3 pice a day as wages. Children below 7 and above 2 years old were paid Re. 1 a month gratuitous relief. Cash payments were stopped when kitchens were opened. Children below 2 were paid 8 annas a month for opium to enable their mothers to attend work. For weakly persons capable of some work separate gangs were made up and they received full wages for doing as much work as they could. I do not think piece-work at favourable rates would have better suited this class of men as their strength was anything but uniform. Some could do 10 cubic feet, others 20 cubic feet, others again 40 cubic feet.

Q. 44.—No contractors were employed to do any work. Baniyas were employed to supply provisions at rates fixed by the Deputy Commissioner from time to time.

Q. 45.—Muster rolls were kept up by the muharirs.

Q. 47.—On any particular work being sanctioned by the Charge Officer or Deputy Commissioner (1) the marking was first done by the Charge Officer himself or under his orders by the Circle Officer or Officer-in-charge; (2) people in search of relief at once flocked to the place from the same or surrounding villages and they brought their own tools and baskets; (3) these men were grouped in gangs of 30 with one mate in charge of each gang; (4) each gang was pointed out every morning the quantity of work they would have to do that day and the site; (5) each gang consisted of 10 diggers and 20 persons to remove the earth dug, and each digger was pointed out the place from where he was expected to dig the required quantity of earth; (6) every evening the quantity of work was measured by the muharir, and these measurements were checked by the Officer-in-charge; (7) payment was made every evening by the Officer-in-charge to each mate; (8) the mates usually distributed the wages to the men in their respective gang in presence of the Officer-in-charge or muharir, and when this was not done the payments were subsequently verified by the muharir or Officer-in-charge. For workmen's dependents one rupee was paid to the father or mother for each child below 7 and above 2 years, and 8 annas were paid for smaller children. Those payments were made monthly.

Q. 51.—Occasionally small parties were drafted from large public works to village works to dig wells for supply of pure drinking water. This became imperatively necessary when a few cases of cholera occurred and men were drafted to dig wells in each village and two men were engaged in each village to draw water from the well for the villagers. The pay of all these drafted men was debited against the large work from which they were drafted.

Q. 52 and 53.—Embankments were raised across nalas to prevent the water from running off, for the use of cattle; fields were also in a few cases embanked, wells were also dug, old tanks were deepened and new tanks dug at costs varying from Rs. 300 to Rs. 3,750.

Q. 54.—I have mentioned only the works done under my supervision, and the Public Works Department had nothing to do with them. These were usually done through malguzars who were appointed Officers-in-charge exclusively for such work. They worked under the supervision of the Circle Inspector and the Charge Officer (myself). In villages where the malguzars were too ignorant or insolvent, the most intelligent tenant was selected to act as Officer-in-charge.

Q. 55.—The work was usually laid down by myself and occasionally, in my absence, by the Circle Inspector; a muharir was employed under each Officer-in-charge, and it was his duty to measure the work; and wages were distributed through the Officer-in-charge (malguzar), and the accounts were kept by the muharir.

The malguzars were responsible to make good any loss by theft or otherwise of moneys kept in his charge. They acted under the orders of the Charge Officer, and the muharir was subordinate to them.

Q. 57.—Only those who were indigent were allowed to work. Whenever any one was reasonably believed to possess means he was not allowed to work in the relief camp.

Q. 58.—In my charge people from one work occasionally went to another if the latter was nearer their homes. The change was not due to largeness or smallness of work.

Q. 59.—In my opinion it is better to have a larger number of small works than a very small number of large works. If only large works are undertaken people would have to travel long distances, hutting and conservancy arrangements will have to be made for them, and the eventual benefit will not be equally distributed.

Q. 60.—~~There~~ were no aboriginal tribes in my charge.

Q. 62.—Some persons were fed in the kitchen and were allowed to do weeding work for very poor cultivators. This was done in August only for 15 or 20 days to complete weeding operations. Their employers were asked to see that they worked properly, but there were numerous complaints that they shirked working as long as they were fed at Government expense.

Q. 63.—No special measures were taken by me for the relief of artizans, such as weavers, &c.

Q. 66.—There was a fair supply of straw for the cattle and the Government forests were opened and therefore it was not necessary to take any special measures for cattle. In villages where there was scarcity of water-supply, wells were dug for supplying water to men and cattle.

Q. 67.—Compressed grass was not supplied as there was sufficient fodder available.

Q. 74.—Seventeen main kitchens were opened in my charge before the rains, and 13 branch kitchens were opened after the commencement of the rains.

Q. 75.—The rations were  $7\frac{1}{2}$  chittaks rice,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  chittaks dal,  $\frac{1}{4}$  chittak of salt, all cooked together (khichri) for one meal.

One meal was supplied to each man per day about noon.

They usually took their food in the kitchen, but occasionally when any one was too ill to come to the kitchen his food was taken home for him by his relatives. They were not compelled to take their food in the kitchen. If any one chose to eat half his ration in the kitchen and take the other half home, he was allowed to do so. But this was not often done.

Q. 76.—No limit of distance was fixed between relief works and kitchens.

Q. 77.—At first, only those who were unable to work from age or infirmity and who were indigent were allowed free food in the kitchen. After the works were closed any one could get food in the kitchen, provided he was indigent.

Q. 75. (a) Patwaris prepared village gratuitous relief lists with the assistance of mukadams: these lists were checked by the Circle Officers, and afterwards by the Charge Officer.

Q. 76. (a) Payments were made (a) invariably in cash, (b) monthly, (c) at the homes of the recipients. All the recipients in one village were collected together, and there they were paid.

Q. 77. (a) Besides those specified in the Famine Code the following also obtained gratuitous relief:—(1) pregnant women.

Q. 78.—Generally Brahmins were appointed cooks. Chhatris, Byragis, Raouts were also engaged as cooks. Chamar cooks were engaged to cook for Chamars.

At first people objected to eat food cooked by men of other castes, but when cooks of different castes were engaged, people of each caste took food prepared by a cook belonging to the same caste.

Q. 79.—Malguzars were usually appointed Officers-in-charge of kitchens. Their work was supervised by the Circle Officer, Assistant Charge Officer and Charge Officer, who checked the accounts, examined the food, &c.

Q. 80.—No cheap grain shop was opened this year.

Q. 87.—The percentage of men on relief works was very high because (1) since the opening of the railway the stock of grain in the villages has been depleted, (2) the people had exhausted all their resources in meeting the famine of 1896, and had no time to save anything against contingent disasters.

Q. 88.—In my opinion the relief works were neither excessive nor defective.

Q. 89.—The recipients of relief were mainly (i) day-labourers, (ii) impoverished tenants of all classes having small holdings, and (iii) the poorer class of malguzars.

Q. 90.—People were not more ready to come on relief, but for reasons stated in reply to Question No. 87 a larger number were forced to do so.

Q. 91.—Private credit was contracted in consequence of the passing of the Tenancy Act and the impoverishment of the people in consequence of last famine, and that was one reason for the higher percentage of men attending relief work, but men who had any means of subsistence did not seek relief, husbanding their resources.

Q. 94.—It is the duty of the kotwar of every village to report every birth and death in the village to the outpost within the circle of which the village is situated.

Q. 95.—Where the mortality was high, it was certainly not due to unsuitable or insufficient food.

Q. 96.—No increased mortality was due to impure or deficient water-supply. Permanganate of potash was used to disinfect wells, once a week or fortnight.

Q. 97.—No special sanitary arrangements were made for works. I do not know anything about poor-houses as none were opened in my charge. Sweepers were engaged to keep the kitchens and their surroundings clean. No latrines were erected.

Q. 98.—Grain shops were inspected at irregular intervals by myself and the Assistant Charge Officer and Circle Officer. Sometimes inferior grain was discovered and its issue was prohibited.

Q. 99.—Some people were in the habit of supplementing their food with wild products. This had no appreciable effect on their health as they were used to it.

Q. 100.—There was no emigration from any Native State into my charge as there was no Native State near my charge.

Q. 102.—There were no orphans in my charge whose relatives were not known.

Q. 105.—Complaints were received by me from cultivators that they could not get labourers to weed their fields as they were all fed in the kitchen. Where such labourers were sent away from kitchens, these complaints ceased.

Q. 106.—There has been no change in the character of the crops sown during the last few years. (a) There is no noticeable increase in double-cropping, nor (b) have other crops been substituted for food crops.

Q. 107.—Wages are very often paid in grain to agricultural labourers. There is no demand for cash payment instead. Wages have slightly risen in consequence of the rise in prices of food stuffs, but not in the same proportion.

Q. 112.—Ordinarily families were not divided, the whole family usually working at the same place, and there was no appreciable relaxation of moral ties.

RAIPUR: }  
The 4th January 1901. }

RAGHOB MAHADIK,  
Honorary Magistrate, Rajim.



HON'BLE J. M. St. CLAIR, A.M.I.C.E., OFFICIATING SECRETARY TO THE  
HON'BLE THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER, CENTRAL PROVINCES, IN  
THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

*The President.*—Were you in the province during the famine of 1897?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What charge had you then?

A.—In the first part of the famine, up to April, I had Hoshangabad.

Q.—On the present occasion you were Superintendent of Works during the whole time?

A.—No, part of the time I was out on duty in the Secretariat to revise the general orders and I afterwards went to the Nágpur Division.

Q.—Did you prepare the special instructions under which the public works operations were carried on during the recent famine?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Will you give me briefly a sketch of your public works organization in this province. Have you got District Boards?

A.—We have District Councils.

Q.—Are local cesses levied as in other Provinces?

A.—We have got our road cesses.

Q.—Is there a separate road fund for each district or is there one large fund which is distributed among all districts?

A.—Districts have separate funds, the cesses of one district cannot be used in another.

Q.—Is the road fund of each district always adequate for the requirements of that particular district?

A.—No, by no means.

Q.—Then it is brought up to sufficiency by contribution from the provincial revenues?

A.—I do not know for certain.

Q.—Is there a system of local financial responsibility for each district road fund, is it supposed to be financially independent?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The District Council I suppose has under its control certain district roads. Roads are divided into two classes, provincial and local. The provincial roads are supported by provincial revenues?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And the district roads are supported entirely by local cesses, plus any contribution that may be made by the Local Government?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Are your cesses sometimes insufficient for the repair and maintenance?

A.—We do not make any contributions for roads from our Public Works funds to district councils we should relieve them of certain roads under these circumstances.

Q.—As regards your public works organization, you have a chief Public Works officer?

A.—Yes. The Superintending Engineer.

Q.—Under him who is the next in gradation?

A.—The Executive Engineer of the division.

Q.—I notice the Superintendent of Works?

A.—That is a special appointment.

Q.—The permanent organization is a Superintending Engineer with Executive Engineers under him?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The Executive Engineer has more than one district in his charge I suppose?

A.—Usually three; there are four divisions with three, and three divisions with two each.

Q.—Have you in each district an officer appointed who has complete management of the Public Works Department in that district?

A.—There is a Sub-Divisional Officer; and the sub-division is generally the same as the district.

Q.—Have you attached in ordinary times in each district an officer whom you call District Engineer or District Surveyor?

A.—No, there is the Sub-Divisional Officer, the Local Public Works Officer.

Q.—The sub-division need not necessarily be coterminous with the district?

A.—Not necessarily. A district may have two sub-divisions.

Q.—And over each sub-division you have appointed a Sub-Divisional Officer who may be an Assistant Engineer?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you employ subordinates as Sub-Divisional Officers?

A.—Yes, we have not got enough Assistant Engineers.

Q.—Did you preserve that system of control during the famine?

A.—Yes, largely multiplying sub-divisions.

Q.—You sub-divided the ordinary sub-divisions?

A.—Yes. And we made totally new ones.

Q.—What I wish to find out is, whether, during your famine administration, you preserved the control of the Sub-Divisional Officer over his former sub-division giving him assistance; or whether you carved out the sub-division into two or more, and appointed a Sub-Divisional Officer for each, with independent authority?

A.—The old sub-division was carved out into new ones.

Q.—And Sub-Divisional Officers were appointed to each?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And these Sub-Divisional Officers then had the direct control and management of all famine relief works established in their sub-division?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Have you any reason to think that it would have been better to preserve the sub-divisions as they existed formerly, giving the Sub-Divisional Officer assistance in carrying out works?

A.—Sub-Divisional Officers had in most cases experience in the control of large works.

Q.—They had been educated at Roorkee?

A.—Nearly all of them.

Q.—At the beginning of the famine were the Sub-Divisional Officers in charge of the sub-divisions all professionally qualified men?

A.—Yes.

Q.—But you did not think that they would be capable of carrying on the works of their sub-division?

A.—It could not have been done, the work was too much for them. They had as much left to them as they could possibly manage.

Q.—Would you consider 250,000 workers an excessive charge for one of those Sub-Divisional Officers?

A.—Certainly.

Q.—Would you consider 100,000 an excessive charge for his general supervision assisted by subordinates?

A.—Yes, even that is too much.

Q.—Fifty thousand?

A.—That would be as much as they could manage. I do not think a Sub-Divisional Officer should have more than six works under him.

Q.—When did you first get warning that your ordinary organization would not be sufficient and that it would be desirable to enlarge it; when was the first note of warning sounded?

A.—In August.

Q.—What did you do on receiving that notice, what steps did you take with a view to bringing your establishment up to the requirements of the situation?

A.—At that time our ordinary organization was sufficient. But we set to work to take on outside men, advertized and wrote to Roorkee and all the Engineering Colleges and everywhere we thought we could get men from.

Q.—Can you tell me how many men were brought upon your list, and were they all Engineering experts or outsiders?

A.—We exhausted all the Engineering experts and then we had to fall back on what we could get. I could not tell you the exact number.

Q.—Did you have a list in case of emergency of persons on whom you could fall back?

A.—Not before the famine.

Q.—Besides your Engineers, your Sub-Engineers, overseers, and so on, your works required the work agents, muharrirs and men of that description?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you bring people required for this also on a list in October?

A.—No. We took them on as we were called on to open works but there was no list of people who were qualified for this.

Q.—I understand that in the beginning you wanted a month's notice before starting work?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Within that month you possibly might have got the establishment; but when the pressure became greater and you had to open works at a day's notice you had no time to get the necessary establishment?

A.—There was no establishment available.

Q.—To what do you attribute the inability of the Public Works Department, which has been testified to, to control or to keep back the rush which came upon you in various parts of the province?

A.—It was only in Chattisgarh that we had an uncontrollable number.

Q.—I notice in the reply that in other districts although you were not called upon to close works as you were in Chattisgarh, yet there was a certain amount of inability to enforce tasks in other districts?

A.—That is true, we had to get our staff together.

Q.—You began with a task of 70 cubic feet I understand?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You found that that task was too little?

A.—Yes.



Q.—You found people were coming in too great numbers upon the works; was that your reason for increasing the task?

A.—We found they could do it easily.

Q.—Was it the opinion of the administration that more people were coming upon relief works than required relief—was that the effect of a low task or an inadequate task?

A.—That was one of the effects.

Q.—In order to counteract that you increased the tasks?

A.—We stiffened them to make the task a real one.

Q.—Did the adjustment of the task rest with you or did it rest with the administration of the province—the Deputy Commissioner or Commissioner?

A.—The Deputy Commissioner had to approve of the task at first; the Public Works Executive Engineers and local subordinates were made entirely responsible later on. The Deputy Commissioner could interfere if he thought the task was high but otherwise he would hardly have interfered.

Q.—The broad result of the task as ultimately fixed was that the labourers were contented with earning considerably below the full wage?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was it your experience generally that the labourers on Public Works were in good condition?

A.—In excellent condition.

Q.—Had you any general statistics of mortality on Public Works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is it your general impression that the mortality on works was small?

A.—The mortality on works for the whole province was 21·6 per mille.

Q.—Does that include men, women and children and dependants?

A.—Every soul on the works.

Q.—You had every class of the community represented upon your works from infants-in-arms up to the old men?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The mortality is very much lower than the mortality in the province?

A.—Yes, the latter was 59·6 per mille.

Q.—Is 59·6 the normal rate?

A.—The normal rate of the decennial period is 33·4 per mille.

Q.—Therefore against a decennial and normal death-rate of 3·34 per cent. you had upon your works a death-rate of 21·6 per cent. There could be no better testimony of the sufficiency of the relief afforded on your works?

A.—No.

Q.—It is an inference that the wages earned were adequate and if the people earned some thing near 20 per cent. under the full wage the inference is that the full wage was 20 per cent. redundant?

A.—It was too high.

Q.—Am I justified in saying that on your works the wages actually paid in the later stages of the famine after having actually been reduced 20 per cent. still remained too high?

A.—I think they did.

Q.—The system of work which you adopted from the outset is the intermediate system without any minimum?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was there a rest day wage throughout?

A.—Not throughout; at first a rest day wage was paid everywhere; then it was stopped.

Q.—In order to enable people to earn during the week days a sufficiency to support themselves on the rest day, did you allow them to earn anything over the subsistence wage on ordinary days?

A.—No, nowhere.

Q.—Then you come to this that not only were wages earned 15 or 20 per cent. under the maximum wage which might have been earned but the workers had no wages for rest days?

A.—Yes, they had no rest day wage, after the rest day wage was stopped.

Q.—When was it stopped?

A.—In January.

Q.—You did not introduce it again?

A.—It was introduced in some places.

Q.—But from January there was no rest day wage generally speaking?

A.—That is so.

Q.—During that period the amount of wages earned was 15 to 20 per cent. under the maximum wage and the wage earned was found to be sufficient?

A.—The exact amount was 17 per cent. of which 6 per cent. is due to the lower wage basis. Only 11 per cent. due to short work on the average in the province.

Q.—Under your intermediate system did you feed dependants including the old and young?

A.—Yes.

Q.—When the intermediate system was first introduced the idea was that people would be enabled to earn enough to support their dependants, but from the outset your system was a modified intermediate system inasmuch as you gave food to dependants and children?

A.—Yes, the modified intermediate system of the Famine Commission's Report.

Q.—Would you be disposed to exclude dependants and to give food to children permitting the workers to earn as much as they could to support their adult dependants?

A.—No, I do not think I would. The adult dependants were very few.

Q.—The infirm gangs were maintained on the Code task system with a minimum wage?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you ever find that they earned anything above the minimum wage?

A.—There are instances of it.

Q.—Taking the Province as a whole would you say that they were contented with the minimum wage?

A.—I would draw a distinction between infirm and weakly gangs; weakly gangs could earn more than the minimum wage, infirm gangs never could.

Q.—Did the people do enough work to secure the minimum wage and remain content with that, or did they simply squat on the works and do nothing?

A.—I think they did work a bit.

Q.—Do you think it was absolutely necessary to have these infirm gangs at all where the minimum wage was paid in all circumstances? would it not have been better to compel them to earn something and to tell them to depend on that, the task required being just enough for their capacity?

A.—The infirm gang was practically incapable of work but we did not want them to be kitchen loafers.

Q.—Did you find it of any use to have children under 10 years of age on the works? The point I am putting to you is this. There is a disposition to doubt the propriety of classifying as workers children of 8 years or 10 years. Some authorities maintain that children under 10 years are hindrances. Others maintain that all children from 8 to 10 do some work and it is desirable that they should be classed as workers?

A.—I think children do a certain amount of work in carrying. I should be inclined to class children over 8 as working children.

Q.—Had you any reason for attributing the shortage of earnings to insufficient Public Works establishments?

A.—I think the conditions were too varied to talk about the condition as a whole.

Q.—You had no test-work I understand?

A.—Only one in Sambalpur.

Q.—And had you any connection with village works?

A.—Not village works properly speaking. We had certain village tank works.

Q.—Was there a regular system of grain inspection on your works?

A.—There were *baniyas*' shops on the works and the officer-in-charge was responsible if there was any bad grain sold.

Q.—If you begin famine relief in time do you think that the intermediate system, without a minimum wage but with payments to dependants, is quite sufficient to meet any degree of distress?

A.—Yes, Sir, we have proved it here.

Q.—Therefore you are disposed to differ from the recommendation of the Commission of 1898 to the effect that in famine tracts the Code task system with the minimum wage is necessary?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Does your experience lead you to recommend any alterations whatever in the relation and co-ordination of the Public Works Officers and the Civil Officers?

A.—The orders are quite distinct on that point.

Q.—If two men fell out, are the rules sufficiently distinct as to their responsibilities?

A.—I think they are. They have each got their own sphere of control. The Deputy Commissioner is entirely responsible for the efficiency of relief and the Executive Engineer for discipline in the camp.

Q.—It was stated in the circular of the 6th of October 1899, No. 26, that the management of large relief works should be conducted by the Public Works Department subject to control by the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner. Now you mention that although the Deputy Commissioner was in the earlier stages consulted with reference to the fixation of the task no such consultation was practised in the later stages and the Executive Engineer fixed the task.

Fixation of the task is a matter closely bound up with the employment of the labourers. The words of the circular of the 6th October (1899) are "his decision," i.e. the Deputy Commissioner "must be accepted (pending reference to superior authority if necessary) in all matters relating to the employment and wages of labourers?"

A.—I understand that to refer to fixing the wage basis.

Q.—If the task is fixed, say at 80 cubic feet for a full task, the full task having reference to a particular soil, when the work gets on to softer soil the task becomes inadequate?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Who then adjusts the task and so the wages?

A.—Public Works Local Subordinates.

Q.—Do they do that without reference to the Civil Officer?

A.—The Civil Officer gets a weekly report from the officer-in-charge. He also gets a copy of the inspection report showing exactly what progress has been made.

Q.—If the Deputy Commissioner passed any orders regarding the task that was to be done, would your subordinate feel himself bound to carry out those orders?

A.—Yes.

Mr. Nicholson.—Do I understand you that from January to the time of the rains the actual earnings of six days, though about 17 per cent. below the full wage, were sufficient to maintain the people for seven days?

A.—I can't say that earnings were 17 per cent. short during the whole course of the famine.

Q.—Did people maintain good health?

A.—Yes, generally.



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**Answers to the Questions drawn up by the Famine Commission, by the Hon'ble L. M. St. Clair, Assoc. M. Inst. C. E., Offg. Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, C. P., P. W. D., dated the 5th January 1901.**

**Question 9 (a).**—A Famine Programme for each district had been drawn up in the Public Works Department *vide* printed Programmes. The programme referred to works which could be taken up as affording work for relief labour. Surveys and estimates for such as had been left incomplete in the last famine existed, but for the most part surveys and estimates had not been got ready for works added to the programme since the last famine, and none for works contemplated for the first time to meet the enormous demand for work. Estimates were quickly prepared for such works as collection of metal, but works had to be begun in many instances on new roads and tanks without plans and estimates, these being made as the work was in progress.

The original Programme of relief-works which was issued on the 27th February 1899 comprised road-works only and provided for the relief of nearly 160 millions day-units in all as compared with 88 millions actually relieved in the Famine of 1896-97. With the rapid advance of the famine, the necessity for providing work-relief for still larger numbers soon became apparent and immediate steps were taken to revise the Programme. Railways, water-supply reservoirs, village tanks and a few minor irrigation works were added, and a comprehensive list was made out for each district to meet all possible developments; the total number of day-units for the whole Province amounting to 464 millions.

The actual numbers relieved in all were 180 millions or only 20 millions in excess of the original Programme (27th February 1899), and 92 millions in excess of the actual numbers relieved in 1896-97. The original Programme fell short in the following districts :—

Wardha,  
Chanda,  
Bhandara,  
Balaghat,  
Hoshangabad,  
Nimar,  
Betul,  
Raipur,  
Bilaspur.

With the exception of the two last-named districts, where the numbers grew beyond all anticipation, no difficulty was felt in keeping the work-programme in advance of the demand for work-relief.

The following table exhibits in a comparative form the numbers (a) relieved in 1896-97, (b) provided for in the original and the revised programmes, and (c) actually relieved in 1899-1900:—

*Statement showing total day-units actually relieved in each district in millions as compared with those provided in Famine Programmes and with the day-units relieved in 1896-97.*

Serial Number.	Districts.	Actual total day-units relieved in 1896-97.	Original programme (Roads only) total day-units 1899.	Actual total day-units relieved 1899-1900.	REVISED FAMINE PROGRAMME 1900.			
					Roads.	Tanks.	Railways.	Total.
		Millions.	Millions.	Millions.	Millions.	Millions.	Millions.	Millions.
1	Jubbulpore ...	8.5	11.3	3.6	22.6	1.0	2.9	26.5
2	Madhya ...	3.8	8.7	0.3	17.4	.....	2.1	19.5
3	Seoni ...	1.8	5.6	3.6	13.2	4.3	12.5	30.0
4	Agar ...	5.8	5.5	3.6	18.7	2.8	0.5	22.0
5	Damoh ...	4.6	1.2	.....	.....	.....	.....	5.2
6	Nagpur ...	2.5	5.3	4.9	18.6	1.3	.....	19.9
7	Wardha ...	0.5	6.9	11.6	13.8	1.3	.....	15.1
8	Chanda ...	.....	8.2	16.3	30.9	1.3	.....	32.2
9	Bhandara ...	6.3	8.0	16.3	21.2	0.4	1.3	22.9
10	Balaghat ...	8.8	11.1	13.3	31.1	0.1	5.0	36.2
11	Hoshangabad ...	10.5	6.1	7.6	21.4	0.2	2.2	23.8
12	Nimar ...	0.2	4.5	7.0	16.2	0.8	6.5	23.5
13	Betul ...	3.2	9.7	13.6	25.6	1.9	.....	27.5
14	Narsinghpur ...	7.1	4.3	0.2	.....	.....	.....	4.3
15	Chhindwara ...	3.2	10.3	10.6	.....	.....	.....	10.3
16	Raipur ...	13.2	19.7	45.3	50.3	28.1	0.7	79.1
17	.....	8.1	13.9	21.4	38.5	2.2	3.6	54.3
18	.....	0.2	5.5	0.8	11.9	.....	.....	12.9
	<b>Total</b> ...	<b>88.3</b>	<b>159.5</b>	<b>180.0</b>	<b>351.4</b>	<b>55.7</b>	<b>37.3</b>	<b>464.2</b>

## Question 9 (b).—No.

**Question 10.**—Large Public Works. To the best of my knowledge no programme of village works was ready. It was only about Christmas that the Public Works Department were called on to take up small village works as *annexe* works to large Public Works Department relief-works, and it was not till February that the Public Works Department obtained lists from the Civil Officers of suitable works to take up.

**Question 20.**—Under the Public Works Department. The scale of establishment was prescribed in advance, *vide* Section II of General Order No. 287—7630-F., dated the 20th September 1899. As soon as notice to open relief-works was received from the Civil Department, steps were at once taken to procure the necessary establishment, tools and plant, &c. At the start one month's notice was prescribed and all the charges or works for which notice was given in the middle of September 1899 were opened on 15th October 1899. The time required before a work could be opened after notice was given was gradually shortened till only a few days' notice was required in certain districts. Speaking generally, no undue delay occurred.

The longest time taken before a camp was opened after notice was given was — ... Thirty Days.

The shortest— ... One day.

The average— ... Fifteen days.

Tools and plant were only available to a very limited extent at the beginning, and it took some time before a sufficiency could be procured. Endeavours were everywhere made to keep the tools and other equipment for two charges at least in each district ready in reserve. Owing to the enormous demand, as works were opened in rapid succession, and the denudation of the local, Bombay and Calcutta markets, this reserve could not be kept up during the period of expansion, and the works in several instances suffered for want of tools in Raipur, Bilaspur and to a slight extent in Chanda.

**Question 21.**—Into charges each of which was calculated and equipped for a maximum of 6,000 people. This maximum was frequently exceeded :—

*Instances where numbers on relief works exceeded 6,000.*

District.	No. of Camps.	Remarks.
Jubbulpore ...	1	Bohriban, during January 1900.
Seoni ...	2	Arvi, for about 3 months from December 1899 to February 1900. Khoont, for about 2 months December 1899 and January 1900.
Mandla ...	.....	<i>Nil.</i>
Saugor ...	1	Benaika, for about a month in broken periods during January and March 1900.
Nagpur ...	3	Bhewannur, for about 1½ months in broken periods from December 1899 to January 1900. Ambajheri, ½ month during May 1900. Thana, for 3 months from March to May 1900.
Wardha ...	10	Sailoo, Nairce, Talegaon, Jaski, Rohona, Alikali, Balgaon, Injapur, Ratku and Koobgaon, 2 months from December 1899 to January 1900.
Chanda ...	13	Mul, Chimur, Garchiroli, Talodi, Kothari, Armorei, Chargaon, Brahmapuri, Chand (Bandak), Warora, Dhanora, Borla and Brahmapuri (or Balapur), at different periods.
Bhandara ...	9	Dongri, Sakoli, Khairlanji, Sadayar, Baheria and Ambora.

District.	No. of Camps.	Remarks.
Balaghat ...	8	Katangi, Kirnapur, Waraseoni, Lamtha, Lalbarra, Dhapewara, Borinda and Nahara, 3 months from November 1899 to January 1900,
Hoshangabad ...	5	Chipabar, Sodulpur, Pathrota, Mandla (in Harda) and Abgaon, for 3 months from December 1899 to February 1900.
Nimar ...	5	Harsud, Boregaon, Barhanpur, Kalimachak and Towa, 1½ months between November 1899 and February 1900.
Betul ...	9	Masod, Satnair, Chichenda, Belmondai, Sukadehi, Kolegaon, Atnair, Patan and Towa, at different periods.
Chhindwara ...	6	Amarwara, Saoli Oomra-Nalla, Panjra, Markhand, and Chourai, at different periods.
Narsinghpur ...	.....	<i>Nil.</i>
Raipur ...	33	Baloda, Nowagaon, Simga, Gorri, Dhamda, Drug, Deori, Kharora, Rajim, Abhanpur, Chitowd, Kussumkassa, Pallari, Kurud, Gunderdehi, Kumbhari, Raipur Head-quarters, Loan, Mana, Tumgaon, Thelka, Dhamteri, Arjunda, Bemetera, Sanjari, Aranda, Hattood, Kopra, Charra, Maroda, Sanjari East, Koliari and Pingesar, at different periods.
Bilaspur ...	16	Champa, Akaltara, Setganga, Nipania, Gorbanda, Taketpur, Jareli (Bilaspur), Seorinarayen, Sendri, Bilaspur Head-quarters, Rahud, Taldeori, Ratanpur, Khajor, Dhuma, Dolorah and Dharas, 2 months from December 1899 to January 1900.
Sambalpur ...	.....	<i>Nil.</i>

As a rule, when this overcrowding occurred the excess was drafted to other distant works already open, or another charge was opened in the immediate neighbourhood, and the excess drafted to the new charge. But this took time and when opened the new charge was frequently rushed at once by people living in the vicinity and itself became overcrowded in a few days. In the Eastern Division the rush to relief-works was so great and the works there open so overcrowded that it was found necessary to close works to fresh admissions till new camps could be opened to relieve the pressure. This was done to avoid complete disorganisation as the expansion of works could not keep pace with the numbers applying.

Owing to the impossibility of finding work for fresh camps, it was necessary to put up with charges of 10,000 to 12,000 and strengthen the establishment rather than have two independent charges mixed up on the same work. I consider that a charge of 10,000 is not unmanageable with a good Officer-in-charge and a competent staff under favourable conditions, and is more economical than two of 5,000 under those circumstances.

**Question 22.**—Each charge had its own establishment. See scale in General Order No. 287-730-F. of 20th September 1899, which was strictly adhered to.

General Order paras. 14, 16, 17, 18 and 30 and page VI of Appendix II.

Hutting and quarters were provided for the staff, the hospital, the kitchen, &c., and facilities given to the people to hut themselves either by turning the labour on for a day or two on to this work when materials were available in neighbouring jungles or by serving out bamboo tattas.

It was not till the rains came and then only in camps selected to be kept open throughout the monsoon that regular hutting for the people was provided. Great difficulty was experienced in procuring a sufficient number of Hospital Assistants or men to take charge of the hospitals and kitchens on works. That Work Agents was also short.

Conservancy, sanitation, water-supply, medical conveniences, &c., were all provided for in accordance with General Order No. 287-7630-F, II, Part II; para. 14 and Appendix II; Conservancy: para. 15; Water-supply: para. 13; Food-Supply para. 19 and Medical conveniences paras. 16, 17 and 18, also Appendix XXIII.

**Question 23.**—At the commencement in all districts and throughout the operations in most, admission was free to all.

(1). The Commissioner, Jubbulpore Division, was authorised in January 1900 to make some trials in the direction of discrimination. He gradually brought his ticket system \* into force in the three districts of Jubbulpore, Soni and Sangor. The effect of this system was to confine relief to the really needy and to exclude from the works all who were not at the end of their available resources and who were attracted chiefly by the close proximity of the works to their villages.

(2). In the Chhattisgarh Division (Raipur and Bilaspur districts) the numbers multiplied at a more rapid pace than that at which the Public Works Department could organise new charges; and in January 1900 it was found necessary to stop the admission of fresh applicants until the Public Works Department organisation could be sufficiently amplified to meet all pressing demands. Such applicants were in the meanwhile referred to the Civil Officers for admission to village works.

The organisation of charges and enforcement of discipline and adequate tasks having been satisfactorily achieved, the temporary restriction was removed in March, and free admission was, except in a few special cases, resumed during that month. Residence on the works was not compulsory.

**Question 25.**—Not in all.

The management of a large relief-work by the Public Works Department was subject to the power of control by the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner in all points affecting the efficiency of relief, but not in matters of a professional nature. The Deputy Commissioner was directed to interfere with the internal working of a Public Works Department charge as little as possible and to exercise his control through the Executive Engineer except in urgent cases. The only District Officers empowered to give orders direct to the Officer-in-charge were the Deputy Commissioner and the Civil Surgeon, and the latter only so far as regards sanitary matters.

The staff on a charge from the Officer-in-charge downwards was entirely under the orders of the Public Work Department Sub-Divisional Officers. The Hospital Assistant was however latterly placed directly under the orders of the Civil Surgeon in matters pertaining to the hospital, kitchen and sanitation.

The officers of the Public Works Department were responsible, subject to the approval of the Deputy Commissioner for fixing the task.

The Public Works Department were really independent only as regards setting out of work and the accounting for expenditure and the supply of tools.

**Question 26.**—Yes. Called an *Officer-in-charge*. These officials were drawn from all sorts of classes. British Non-Commissioned Officers, Officers of the Native Army, Naib-Tahsildars, Revenue Inspectors, Clerks in Government Offices and Outsiders.

Rs. 100-10-150, by monthly increments for approved service.

Directly subordinate to the Public Works Department Sub-Divisional Officers, the Famine Works Superintendent having power to see that the Officer-in-charge carried out everything according to rule.

The Officer-in-charge had full power to assure himself that measurements were correctly and punctually made, and was responsible for seeing that the orders of Government as contained in para. 126 of Famine Commission and para. 14 of C. P., G. O. No. 287-7630-F, were carried out.

**Question 27.**—This was usually done by the W the control of the Officer-in-charge, and above him again



**Question 28.**—In accordance with paras. 24 to 29, Section IV of General Order 287-7630-F. As a rule all "intermediate" gangs contained about 20 members. In some instances, *e. g.*, the Hoshangabad Division, they contained up to 50 in order to reduce the number of gangs. In carrying operations by either the "chain" or "long-lead" system, the gangs consisted of 80 including all classes. Great care was taken to have the gangs composed as far as possible of persons from the same village and families were invariably kept together in the same gang. No trouble was experienced in doing this.

**Question 29.**—At the commencement, the classification and wage scale of para. 445 of Famine Commission's Report was adopted and was subsequently modified by Famine Secretary's Circular No. F-41—161 of 22nd January 1900, which please see.

The departure from the original scale contributed both to economy and to the removal from the works of persons who were not really in need of relief.

**Question 30.**—I do not consider that any distinction should be made between the sexes in the same class. But in the case of earth-work no woman should be classed as a digger or Class I worker. If employed on digging it should be on a reduced task, and on Class II wage. On metal-breaking all except the most robust males are Class II. The task for Class I on metal-breaking is 50 % more than that for Class II, while the difference in wage is never as much as 50 % being 19: 15. Therefore the Class I workers do a relatively larger task for a given expenditure than Class II workers would. The absence of any distinction did not lead to any difficulty; on the contrary, it is a great convenience administratively to have only three classes of workers without sexual sub-divisions.

**Question 31.**—No. The "intermediate" system or payment by results as described in para. 25 of G. O. No. 287—7630-F., was introduced from the first and maintained throughout. (b) "Task" system gangs were nearly everywhere attached to the charges in which weakly persons not belonging to workers in the "intermediate" gangs were employed.

**Question 32.**—I consider that the "intermediate" system in force throughout the operations afforded adequate relief.

**Question 33.**—The standard tasks laid down in paras. 46 and 47 of G. O. No. 287—7630-F., were in force at the commencement of operations, *viz.*, 70 cft. pit measurement for soft earth-work with the task for other soils in proportion. These were gradually raised to 80, 85, 90 and as high as 100 cft. in soft soil.

In metal-breaking the task varied so much on different charges and at different times on the same charge according to the nature of the stone that sometimes the task exacted when the work started had to be lowered and again raised several times. Roughly speaking the initial tasks were 3 cft. and 2 cft. for class I and II respectively, in hard stone like basalt and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  cft. and 3 cft. in soft stone like quartz, sandstone and the soft laminated clay stones of Chhattisgarh. These tasks were gradually raised in the course of the first week of a gang's existence.

No allowance was made for the distance the workers had come from the place where they slept at night. At the commencement of the hot weather\* tasks were reduced so that rest might be taken by the workers during the great heat of the day between 12 and 3 p. m. Tasks were raised again at the commencement of the rains (in July) partly with a view to inducing people to leave the works which they appeared disinclined to do.

In March weakly gangs were formed of "nursing mothers." Some women with babes at the breast, who remained in the intermediate gangs with their relatives at their own request were only given a half task. From the end of January children between the ages of 12 and 14 had their tasks reduced from those of Class II to those of Class III, but at the same time their wages were also reduced.

The scale of wages fixed in the G. O. No. 287—7630-F., and modified 1-F., dated 22nd January 1900, is, in my opinion, liberal. The

effect of the 25 % variation in the wage-basis and the short work done by the workers was to reduce the purchasing power of their earnings to approximately:—

14 to 16 chhittaks for Class I

12 to 13 „ „ Class II

6 to 7 „ „ Class III

against 19, 15 and 8 respectively, as prescribed in Famine Circular No. F-41 of 22nd January 1900 as shown below :—

District.	Average wage-basis.	Average market price of the cheapest grain.	STANDARD ALLOW- ANCE ON AVERAGE WAGE-BASIS			Percentage that average wage basis was below average market price of cheapest grain.	REMARKS.
			CLASS I.	CLASS II.	CLASS III.		
			19	15	8		
			Purchasing power of wages actually earned in cheapest grain.				
	Seers.	Seers.	Chitaks.	Chitaks.	Chitaks.		
Jubbulpore ...	13½	12	14.7	11.7	6.0	12	
Seoni ...	12	10½	15.8	12.3	7.8	14	
Mandla ...	11½	11½	16.4	12.9	8.6	...	
Saugor ...	12	11	15.7	12.4	8.2	9	
Nagpur ...	10½	10	15.5	12.2	7.5	5	
Wardha ...	11½	10½	16.5	13.1	7.9	10	
Chanda ...	10	9½	15.7	12.4	7.1	5	
Bhandara ...	10½	9½	14.1	11.2	7.1	10	
Balaghat ...	10½	9½	15.4	12.1	7.1	10	
Hoshangabad ...	11	10	14.2	11.2	7.5	10	
Betul ...	9½	9	15.6	12.4	6.8	6	
Nimar ...	10	9½	13.6	10.7	7.1	5	
Narsinghpur ...	12	10	15.0	11.8	7.5	20	
Chhindwara ...	11	9½	15.4	12.1	7.1	16	
Kaipur ...	11½	10½	16.0	12.7	7.9	10	
Bilaspur ...	11½	10½	16.2	12.7	7.8	10	
Sambalpur ...	10	10	18.2	14.2	7.5	...	

The workers were able to maintain themselves in very good condition on the above.

**Question 35.**—A rest-day wage was given at the start, but was abolished later on in certain districts.

The workers were never allowed to earn more than a full wage.

I would prefer the total abolition of a rest-day wage and as an alternative allow the workers to earn more than the full wage in order to support themselves on the rest day. They, however, as a rule, appeared to be able to do this, even without getting more than a full wage and it does not seem necessary to do more than abolish the rest-day wage under the present system. The rest-day wage gives great trouble to the staff, causes great expense to Government, and it is more than doubtful if all the workers got the money. The test to qualify for the rest-day wage is that the worker should have been on the works for the three preceding days. The gangs are re-formed on Sunday (the usual rest day) and the rest-day wage paid on Monday. It is a matter of considerable difficulty to identify the workers that have been on the works on the three days preceding the Sunday. The mates and with them gang muharrirs have great opportunities of appropriating the money due for the Sunday wage to the workers who do not happen to be in the re-formed gangs on the Monday. I am therefore of opinion that a rest-day wage should not be paid to workers on the "intermediate" system, but that it should be paid to gangs on the "task-work" system which are composed entirely of weakly persons.

**Question 36.**—As nearly all works have been on the "intermediate" system, there has been no question of limiting earnings to the minimum wage in the case of short work. The instances are very rare I believe, where less than half the full wages were paid. The minimum wage I consider too high. There is not so great a difference between the full and minimum wage to induce people working on

"task-work" to exert themselves to do anything like the full task when the system is in force generally for the able-bodied and weakly alike. With weakly gangs only on "task-work" it is more a question of maintaining them, and improving their condition than of obtaining work from them. On the "intermediate" system workers frequently were satisfied with doing enough to earn less than the minimum wage. These were people who were really not in urgent need of relief but were quite prepared to do a little work in order to procure a few pice to supplement their other means. The problem is to separate such people and prevent them from handicapping those who really are in need of all that they can possibly earn and are prepared to work hard to earn full wages.

**Question 37.**—All works were started on the "intermediate" system. There was no such thing as a minimum wage for workers. On the whole, workers earned the following percentages of full wages:—

District.	FULL WAGES.			ACTUALLY EARNED.			Percentage of full wages actually earned.	Remarks.
	Class I.	Class II.	Class III.	Class I.	Class II.	Class III.		
	Pice.	Pice.	Pice.	Pice.	Pice	Pice		
Jubbulpore ...	6	4	2	4.9	3.0	2	82 to 98	
Seoni ...	6	5	3	6.0	4.7	3	94 to 100	
Mandla ...	8	6	3	5.7	4.5	3	71 to 75°	
Saugor ...	6	5	3	5.7	4.5	3	90 to 95	
Nagpur ...	7	6	3	6.2	4.9	3	82 to 88	
Wardha ...	7	5	3	6.3	5.0	3	90 to 100	
Chanda ...	8	6	3	6.6	5.2	3	82 to 87	
Rhandara ...	7	6	3	5.9	4.7	3	78 to 84	
Balaghat ...	7	6	3	6.5	5.1	3	85 to 93	
Hoshangabad ...	7	5	3	5.7	4.5	3	81 to 90	
Betul ...	8	6	3	7.0	5.5	3	88 to 92	
Nimar ...	8	6	3	5.7	4.5	3	71 to 75†	
Narsinghpur ...	6	5	3	6.0	4.7	3	94 to 100	
Chhindwara ...	7	5	3	6.5	5.0	3	93 to 100	
Raipur ...	7	5	3	6.1	4.8	3	87 to 96	
Bilaspur ...	7	5	3	6.2	4.8	3	89 to 96	
Sambalpur ...	8	6	3	7.3	5.7	3	91 to 95	

° Piece-work system was in force.

† A large percentage were aborigines who worked on "task-work" and only earned the minimum wage.

The worst case that came to my notice was in Chanda, at Madwari Camp No. 1, where on the 31st January, gang No. 137 earned and were paid only 52% of the full wage. At the Garchiroli Camp No. 4 of the same District, about which there had been complaints of so-called excessive fining, in no instance did any gang receive less than 60% of the full wage.

**Question 38.**—Daily.

**Question 39.**—Daily.

**Question 40.**—To the head of the gang, on the "intermediate" system which was almost universally in force. Payment was made to individuals in the weakly gangs working on "task-work."

For convenience and economy of labour, as well as of copper coin, the system of

See P. W. Department Circular F-7, dated 22nd March 1900.

the mate,

treating the gang as a whole and paying the mate or head of the gang is to be preferred; it being explained to the workers by the Gang muharrirs at the time of payment, how much each individual has to receive from

**Question 42.**—The system known in the Central Provinces as the "intermediate" was in force. This is fully described in G. O. No. 287-7630-F. of 20th September 1899, para. 25. It is the same as the North-Western Provinces "intermediate" system. It is really the Code "task-work" system without a minimum.

**Question 43.**—The maximum wages were:—

Class I. Originally 20 chittaks reduced subsequently to 19 chittaks, vide Family Circular No. 41-F of 22nd January 1900.

Class II. 15 chittaks.

Class III. 8 chittaks.

All children under 8 years of age were fed at kitchens. As were also weakly adults and children above that age incapable of doing work. Weakly adults and children over 8 years capable of doing some work were put into weakly gangs working on the "task-work" system with light tasks. Children above 8 in good condition were put into the intermediate gangs, but in calculating wage of a gang for short work full wages were always allowed for the children.

As these weakly gangs were few and far between and were employed on miscellaneous light work which could not be measured or in which a task could not be fixed, the arrangements for "task-work" with a minimum wage, (more than which they seldom got) is preferable.

**Question 44.**—Contractors were only employed at the commencement of the operations on erecting camps, digging wells, collecting rubble for the relief-workers to break, and such like work.

In only one district, *viz.*, Mandla, was the experiment of carrying out piece-work through the agency of a contractor tried. It is thus described, by the Executive Engineer:—

"At first it was feared that the Gonds would not understand this piece-work system and would be frightened away from the works. A minimum wage was accordingly fixed by the Commissioner for Gonds on the 13 seers wage-basis. Experience showed, however, that the Gonds were as eager as any to earn all they could, and the minimum wage very soon fell entirely into disuse. This was mainly owing to the tact and good sense shown by Mohamed Ismail and his subordinates in their dealings with the workers. The experiment of carrying on relief-work through a contractor was tried successfully. The contractor was employed principally on the repairs to the Shahpara-Kundam Road. This section is the furthest from the head-quarters of the Sub-Division, and this method was found to be a great convenience. The work also was of a kind, the measurement of which could be easily checked. Measurements were made, and contractor's bills paid weekly by the Sub-Divisional Officers at normal rates. The contractor on his part paid the workers daily at the rates in force on the rest of the works. This left him the necessary margin of profit. The workers were free to go to the contractor or to the Public Works Department works at their own will. The fact that they went to the work nearest their homes shows that the rates were fair and evenly balanced. \* \* \* The experience gained seems to show that where work is plentiful and numbers are not too large, the system described above is efficient and very economical."

**Question 45.**—Nominal muster rolls were not kept up, gang registers showing only numbers in each class. The form of gang registers and other accounts were specially designed for facilitating the change from the "intermediate" to the "task-work" system at a day's notice, *vide* G. O. No. 287-7630-F. of 20th September 1899, paras. 30 and 31 and Appendix XI (Field Accounts Form No. I).

**Question 46.**—The Deputy Commissioner of the District.

The prices scale was based on the price of the cheapest readily available, common grain or rice used in the district. Small variations were neglected.

**Question 47.**—I.—*Before opening a Camp.*

Immediately on receipt of warning for the opening of a camp by a specified date the following preparatory arrangements were made in accordance with the instructions laid down in the G. O. No. 287-7630-F, dated 20th September 1899:—

- (i) The requisite staff was sent out with a sufficiency of tools, tents and miscellaneous articles as detailed in Appendix II to the G. O.; also a complete set of medicines, surgical appliances and sundries as given in Appendix XXIII.
- (ii) Water supply was conserved, wells were disinfected (*vide* Appendix IX) according to Professor Harkin's method, and careful arrangements were made for the distribution of water throughout the camp and at the works: *vide* paras. 100 to 104 of the G. O. and S. E's. Circular No. F-24-S, dated 18th May 1900.
- (iii) The supply of grain, coin and Police guard was arranged for in consultation with the Deputy Commissioner, *vide* paras. 85 and 87 to 89 of the G. O.

- (iv) The camp was erected in accordance with the plan accompanying Appendix II to the G. O., the most essential parts being got ready first (hospital, kitchen, piasos, &c.) and the remainder later on if they could not be completed before the opening of the Camp. Putting materials where required were provided in advance for the workers to enable them to make their own *chhappers vide* paras. 105 and 6 of the G. O.,
- (v) All conservancy, hospital and general sanitary arrangements were made in strict accordance with paras. 107 to 113 of the G. O.
- (vi) At least 5 miles of road-work was laid out in advance; and in the case of metal-breaking, rubble was collected at road-side by contract in the earlier stages to provide sufficient work for all applicants. Subsequently relief labour was usefully employed on rubble collection also.

## II.—After opening a work—

- (i) All persons calling for relief with their dependants were admitted without restriction. The principles regulating the admission of new comers are fully stated in Public Works Department Circular No. F-9, dated 6th April 1900.
- (ii) Applicants were classified by the Officer-in-charge in accordance with paras. 21 and 22 of the G. O.; the workers being formed into gangs (paras. 36 to 40 of the G. O.) and the dependants incapable of doing any work being sent to the kitchen (paras. 90 to 99 of the G. O.)
- (iii) The Officer-in-charge re-formed the gangs every week (Sunday evening). He allotted the gangs to the gang-muharrirs and ordered the Tools muharrirs to supply the necessary tools and baskets.
- (iv)-(a) *Every morning—*

- (1) The Gang-muharrir mustered his gangs, checked their tools and baskets, and made the requisite entries in the gang register.
- (2) The Work Agent saw that the task for the day was correctly calculated and entered having regard to the nature of the work the gang was doing or the soil it was working in, set out the task and explained it to the mate; measured up the task performed on the *previous* day and noted the fines in the case of the task gangs and the proportion of work done to task set in the case of intermediate workers.

### (b) *Every evening—*

The Gang-muharrir paid the wages after making the necessary deductions on account of fines and short work as noted by the Work Agent. The wages of the task gangs were paid to individuals; and those of the intermediate workers to the head-man or mate, each class of workers being told exactly what wages they were to get.

The step by step procedure as regards tasking, payments, &c., is given very clearly in Appendix V to the G. O.

**Question 48.**—Tasks were fixed by the Public Works Department Sub-Divisional Officers acting under the Executive Engineer's orders. In the first instance these tasks were fixed in consultation with the Deputy Commissioner, but the Sub-Divisional Officer was responsible for seeing from time to time that they were neither excessive nor inadequate.

The wage-basis was fixed by the Deputy Commissioner.

**Question 51.**—The only drafting of this sort was when gangs were sent from a large road-work to work on small village tanks in the neighbourhood, but as these gangs still belonged to and were looked after by the staff of the parent charge, this can hardly be called drafting in the sense of transferring persons from the Public Works Department charges for good.

**Question 53.**—As a rule the village works were so designed as to act more or less as auxiliaries to the large Public Works and did not really compete with them. In some cases, their spheres of action were entirely distinct and apart; as for example, in the Jubbulpore District where the Northern or Murwara Tahsil was given over entirely to large works, while the Sihora Tahsil and the distressed part of the Jubbulpore Tahsil were provided for by Public Works.

Special precautions were enjoined in Famine Circular No. F-6-3364, dated 14th August 1899, to reduce the attractiveness of village works by paying wages appreciably lower than those paid on the Public Works. As soon, however, as the workers got accustomed to the tasks exacted and discipline enforced at the Public Works Department works, they showed a decided inclination in favour of the Public Works where these were in close proximity to the village works. The extra wage was only one of the many attractions that the superior organization of the Public Works offered. There was first of all the certainty of a daily payment. Then there were so many inspecting officers acting in various capacities and making frequent investigations into all branches of work-relief that the worker could always safely count upon his grievances being heard and promptly redressed. The incapable dependants were sure of their daily meals in the kitchens and the sickly and infirm of gentle treatment in the hospital. The water-supply and conservancy arrangements were the best that could be devised and the strict control maintained over the *bannia* ensured an uninterrupted supply of all articles of food at reasonable prices.

The above remarks do not apply to Chhattisgarh, where for a time the Public works were hopelessly overcrowded (January 1900) and the labour test was more nominal than real. The expansion of village works and stoppage of admission to Public Works Department charges were for the time being absolutely necessary to bring the Public Works Department organization into thorough order. When once the main essentials to the reality of the labour-test, *viz.*, fulfilment of adequate tasks and observance of discipline, were restored, the Public Works in Chhattisgarh lost a good deal of their attractiveness and the two systems of works ceased to interfere with each other so much.

**Question 68.**—In kitchens, where they were given cooked rations.

**Question 75.**—See paras. 93 and 94 of G. O. No. 287-7630-F. of 20th September 1899.

They were compelled to eat in the kitchen enclosure under sheds. At first they were allowed to take away what they could not eat, but this was stopped as it led to abuses.

As a rule meals were distributed twice daily, usually a light meal such as "Ambil" at 9 a. m., and "kitchri" at 4 p. m. Where kitchens were very crowded, only one meal could be given till the establishment of branch kitchens. One meal appears to be sufficient.

**Question 77.**—Free.

**Question 78.**—Brahmin cooks or other high caste cooks were employed. In Chhattisgarh, where there were large numbers of chamars these people were fed in a separate part of the kitchen-sheds and chamar cooks employed for them as they objected to food cooked by men of any other caste.

Some reluctance was shown at the commencement by the higher castes in the hope of obtaining cash doles or dry-grain rations in lieu of cooked food; but it soon disappeared with the exercise of a little firmness.

**Question 79.**—The Kitchen-muharrir was in immediate charge of the kitchen under the orders of the Hospital Assistant. The Officer-in-charge exercised supervision and check over both. The Sub-Divisional Officer, Public Works Department, the Famine Works Superintendent and all other Inspecting officers frequently inspected the kitchens; also the Civil Surgeon as often as practicable.

**Questions 96.**—The very greatest trouble was taken on large relief-works to secure a pure supply of water as far as possible. New wells were dug in hundreds in the banks and beds of rivers and all sources of water-supply for the relief-works were carefully protected and guarded to prevent contamination. All sources of supply were periodically disinfected with permanganate at least once a week, and this was done every second day if cholera was about. That the measures adopted were efficacious is proved by the immunity of the works generally from cholera, while it was prevalent in surrounding villages, and the rapidity with which it was stamped out if introduced into a camp.

Special measures were taken in certain districts to meet the wide-spread failure of water-supply. The rainfall in the Nimar District was abnormally low, and by the time the first symptoms of distress appeared, practically all sources of water-supply had dried up. Even the Nerbudda was at its lowest, and it was at one time feared that all workers would have to be concentrated in the banks of this river whether useful employment for them could be found or no. When the relief camp was being opened at Barrer near Harnad, reliance had been placed on certain

wells which were being deepened at the most promising sites. These failed absolutely, and for miles all round there was no drinkable water available except at a very few village wells which scarcely sufficed for the wants of the villagers and which themselves showed signs of an early failure. Recourse was then had to a simple, inexpensive method of utilizing the stagnant pools of water held back by rocky out-crops in the nallas after they had ceased to flow. There was a large body of stagnant water close to the Barrur camp which even the cattle refused to touch. A trial was made by throwing a dam of moorum across the pool at its deepest and narrowest part, sufficiently wide to allow of a series of four feet wells being excavated in the body of the dam. The wells were lined with corrugated iron sheets perforated at the bottom or with beer casks. For a few days the water was drawn out of these wells and thrown back into the nalla to induce a flow through the porous moorum band which was thereby gradually washed clean and ultimately covered on its water faces with a thick vegetable scum. A most effectual process of horizontal filtration through the scum then set in, the water yielded by the wells being marvellously pure. The success of this system saved the situation throughout the Nimar, Betul and Hoshangabad districts. All large reaches of water were at once carefully searched and marked on the maps and treated in the manner described above, wherever other modes of supply were not practicable. Where water was still flowing at the time in any of these districts, dams were thrown across the streams at sites selected in consultation with the Deputy Commissioner, and the water so held back was similarly treated.

Special measures were also adopted in most districts to remove all chances of contamination in the distribution of water to the workers. The hand to hand distribution of water and the dipping of *lotas* in water vessels were done away with; and iron vessels with covers and taps were substituted for the earthen vessels (*nands*) in the *piaos*. The method of distribution is fully described in Superintending Engineer's Circular No. F-24-S, dated the 18th May 1900.

The effect of a pure and abundant supply of water on the condition of the workers throughout the Province was a marked feature of the relief operations. They were maintained in excellent health even in the remotest and least accessible parts of the Province and enjoyed immunity from cholera while it was raging in the surrounding villages. Out-breaks of cholera in the relief camps caused by new-comers from infected areas were promptly and easily suppressed.

The high mortality in the Nimar District formed the subject of a special investigation. The immunity enjoyed by the workers as a whole is thus described by the Administrative Medical Officer: "The influence of this cause (scarcity of water) has lately been shown in a striking manner by the immunity from cholera which the workers at the relief camps, where a tight hold was kept over the water-supply, enjoyed, compared with the residents of the surrounding villages."

**Question 100.**—Large numbers of foreigners immigrated from the adjoining Native States in the following districts :—

- (I). *Saugor District.*—The immigrants were chiefly from the Rajputana States, Bhopal, Gwalior and Lalitpur, and as a rule arrived in miserable condition. The *Marwarees* alone numbered 2,000 average daily or over one-sixth of the average relief population of the district (11,700). They lingered on the works till the close of the operations.
- (II). *Hoshangabad District.*—The immigrants were chiefly *Marwarees*, *Bhopalis* and *Beraris*. A census taken in March 1900 showed that at one work alone there were 2,933 foreigners out of a total of 6,690, and that altogether there were nearly 7,500 of them on the works, representing over one-fourth of the total attendance of March (23,878).
- (III). *Nimar District.*—There was a considerable influx of foreigners from the Bombay Presidency, Berar and the adjoining Native States in Central India; but no statistics are available.

**Question 101.**—The immigrants as a rule arrived in a state of general debility and great fatigue. Captain Creagh, Famine Works Superintendent, Hoshangabad District, reports that "many infants were brought to the work suffering from Marasmus,

a hereditary and wasting disease which was practically incurable." The death-rate on the Public Works in the Hoshangabad District (average relief population 24,284) was 29·7 per *mille* from all causes and 15·2 excluding cholera and small-pox. The mortality was highest in (1) the Nerbudda Camp which contained a number of ill-conditioned Bunjaras and Bhopalis; (2) Appaon where 120 out of 273 workers were foreigners, and (3) Chipabar where the proportion of foreigners was 99 : 236.

**Question 109.**—Thirteen Staff Corps Officers were employed in supervision as Famine Works Superintendents under the Public Works Department.

Twenty-four Officers of the Native Army and British Non-Commissioned Officers were employed as Officers-in-charge, Tools muharrirs and Work Agents.

As men from nearly every department were employed and still the supply was insufficient, it is difficult to suggest any other source.



**'COLONEL A. SCOTT-REID, I.M.S., ADMINISTRATIVE MEDICAL  
OFFICER, NAGPUR.'**

*Mr. Bourdillon.*—How long have you been the Principal Officer in the Provinces?

*A.*—Since the 21st May 1899.

*Q.*—You have given a death-rate return month by month. Looking at that return it seems to be correct to say that up to December the death-rate throughout the province was below the decennial mean?

*A.*—It was: 1898-1899 was a healthy year.

*Q.*—In December and January there began to be a steady rise in the figures?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Up to March you had no epidemic?

*A.*—There had been a few cases of cholera in the Nimar district.

*Q.*—The epidemic season seems to be May, June and July?

*A.*—May, June, July and August. It begins to decrease in September and October.

*Q.*—Leaving aside the question of epidemic, the rise in the death-rate began from January, and was especially noticeable in June and during the wet months July, August, September and October?

*A.*—Yes, the death-rate ran high in those months. It was very high in Nimar.

*Q.*—As it so happened the autumn of September 1899 was particularly healthy?

*A.*—Yes. It was particularly healthy because it had been unusually dry and the results of the failure of rain had not made themselves apparent.

*Q.*—The sickness which comes in September and October is the result of cold and chill?

*A.*—Usually.

*Q.*—But owing to the drought this was not the case in the autumn of 1899?

*A.*—Not in the autumn of 1899.

*Q.*—Is there any special reason for Nimar being so particularly unhealthy?

*A.*—There is no special reason beyond what is given in my report. I think the principal factor as regards Nimar was the large influx of foreigners; and to a less extent the increase of disease among the resident population from immigration.

*Q.*—The same thing happened in Sambalpur?

*A.*—Yes, in Sambalpur and Wardah.

*Q.*—Then another very unfortunate feature is that noticed on page 7 of your note in connection with the infant mortality?

*A.*—That was especially in the Wardah district.

*Q.*—Then the table on page 8 does not refer to the whole province?

*A.*—That only refers to the Wardah district.

*Q.*—On the table of page 7—45 per cent. of the deaths are said to be among children under five years of age?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Has any plan occurred to you by which this state of things could be prevented?

*A.*—I do not think it would be possible to prevent it entirely.

*Q.*—You have pointed out that owing to the severe drought there was great mortality of cattle and there was no milk to be had?

*A.*—Yes.

*The President.*—Would you subscribe, to the statement that the excessive mortality which prevailed in these districts, in Nimar, in Betul, in Chhindwara, and Chanda and Sambalpur, was largely due to immigration of foreigners?

*A.*—Yes, I think so.

*Q.*—In Nimar, you made a special enquiry?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—You were unable to get accurate figures as to the death-rate of foreigners who came in; but from such tests as you could apply you were disposed to attribute the extreme mortality there to the foreigners who came in a very debilitated state?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—On further consideration you would adhere to that?

*A.*—Oh, certainly: I have no reason to alter my opinion.

*Q.*—Bad water-supply was also a contributory cause?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Had you any reason whatever to connect the mortality in Nimar, with any want of sanitary precautions in the kitchens? We have had it stated to us that owing to the pressure on the establishment, the same amount of sanitary precautions was not taken at kitchens as was altogether desirable, for instance, the food was bad and there was a plague of flies. Do you think these causes were of sufficient importance as to seriously affect the mortality?

*A.*—The spread of cholera is often ascribed to these causes, but I am not inclined to take them as a potent factor. I think the great channel of communication is the water; but no doubt flies do communicate cholera.

*Q.*—Then we can take it, that mortality among children was large inasmuch as the attendance of children at kitchens was very large?

*A.*—Yes.

Q.—Was there a good deal of dysentery and bowel complaints that might be put down to insufficient or unwholesome food?

A.—The mortality from dysentery and diarrhoea was high in Chanda.

Q.—That would probably be caused by famine conditions?

A.—Yes, the conditions are produced by famine.

Q.—It has been stated by the Deputy Commissioner of Betul that exposure during the rains, in going to and fro from kitchens, was responsible for some mortality. What is your opinion?

A.—I think there may be something in it.

Q.—Your death-rates are worked out on deduced statistics of population, are they not?

A.—Yes.

Answer by Colonel A. SCOTT REID, I. M. S., Administrative Medical Officer,  
to Question No. 94 drawn up by the Famine Commission.

Q. 94.—*System of registration of births and deaths in the Central Provinces.*

Village watchmen or kotwars are required to report all births and deaths occurring within their villages at the Police stations to which they make their periodical reports. In municipal towns the inhabitants themselves are required to report births and deaths at the Town station-house or out-post.

The Officer in charge of each Police station is required to enter, village by village, each birth or death reported to him in a register supplied to him for the purpose, and to send to the Civil Surgeon's office weekly, *i. e.*, on the 8th, 15th, 22nd and 1st of each month, for the periods ending on the 7th, 14th, 21st and last day of the month, a copy of the totals made in his register during the previous week.

From the weekly returns received by him as above, the Civil Surgeon causes a monthly return to be compiled in his office for the whole district which is sent to the Office of the Administrative Medical Officer, where a return for the whole Province is compiled and published in the local Gazette.

The above system is uniform throughout the Province.

NAGPUR :

The 3rd January 1901. }

A. SCOTT REID, COLONEL, I. M. S.,

*Administrative Medical Officer.*



MESSRS. CAREY, I.C.S., COMMISSIONER OF SETTLEMENTS AND AGRICULTURE AND R. H. CRADDOCK, I.C.S., CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER.

*The President.*—What official position do you now hold, Mr. Carey?

A.—Commissioner of Settlements.

Q.—And what are you, Mr. Craddock?

A.—I am Secretary in charge of the Department of Famine Relief Administration.

Q.—You are both thoroughly familiar with the system of relief in these provinces during recent years?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Does your system of village accounts enable you to give a statement of the actual crops for every cultivated field in the province?

A.—Mr. Carey: Yes.

Q.—That statement of the actual crops sown in every cultivated field in the province is tested, I understand, annually?

A.—Mr. Carey: Yes, a percentage is tested.

Q.—Your system, I understand, is that every field in the village bears a number which is reproduced in your field book or *khasra*, which shows the area of the field and the nature of the crop sown in it?

A.—Mr. Carey: Yes.

Q.—That document is corrected every year by the *patwari*?

A.—Mr. Carey: Yes.

Q.—The correctness of the *patwari* is tested by the Land Revenue Inspector and by the Superior Officers?

A.—Mr. Carey: Yes.

Q.—So that there is a practical assurance that the figures prepared from this document are substantially correct?

A.—Mr. Carey: Yes.

Q.—Besides that you have had from time to time experiments made throughout the province with the object of ascertaining what is the average yield of each crop?

A.—Mr. Carey: Yes.

Q.—So that you are in a position to state what is the gross cultivated area in every district and what is the area under any particular crop and the average crop outturn of any particular area?

A.—Mr. Carey: Yes.

Q.—Your statistics will enable you to show what proportion of land is cultivated with food crops and what with non-food crops?

A.—Mr. Carey: Yes.

Q.—May I assume that the non-food crops are acre for acre more valuable than the food crops. The non-food crops being cotton and sugarcane?

A.—Mr. Craddock: If you take the average of all food crops and of non-food crops the average profit from non-food crops will be slightly greater. The gross profit on cotton is greater than the gross profit on wheat.

Q.—Taking wheat as your valuable food crop, do you think that cotton is a more paying crop than wheat?

A.—Mr. Carey: I should think that the value of the wheat would be Rs. 20 per acre and cotton Rs. 15.

Q.—This is very much less than what we have just heard from a *mālguzār*?

A.—Mr. Carey. I am very glad to hear it. It shows how moderate our estimates are. I have given you our standard outturns.

Q.—What proportion of the gross produce of land sown with cotton do you consider is taken for rent?

A.—Mr. Carey: One-tenth.

Q.—What is it in Raipur?

A.—Mr. Carey: Eight to ten per cent.

Q.—That is more than the *mālguzār* has told us.

A.—Mr. Craddock: The highest rental is in Jubbulpur, namely, 15 per cent. of the gross produce, and the lowest in Chhindwara, namely, 5 per cent.

Q.—Then out of the ten per cent. of the gross produce paid as rent Government revenue is 60 per cent.?

A.—Mr. Craddock: That is only in Nagpur. In Jubbulpur it is 51 per cent. and in Narsinghpur 50 per cent.

Q.—Then the Government revenue would be 5 per cent. on the outturn according to your standard of production?

A.—Mr. Craddock: Between 7.9 and 2.9.

Q.—According to other witnesses, it is something like 2 per cent. According to your statement the incidence of Government revenue is higher in the Narsinghpur district and Jubbulpur districts?

A.—Mr. Craddock: Yes.

Q.—We were told by Mr. Fuller that the Jubbulpur district had been a scarcity district rather than a famine district?

A.—Mr. Craddock: Practically in the highest rented part of the Jubbulpur district there was no famine.

Q.—The conclusion that presses upon me from all these facts is, in the first place that all round the incidence of revenue on the gross produce is only 5 per cent., and in the next place that where the incidence of revenue was greatest there the famine was least. Consequently the inference I draw is that the pressure of revenue upon the soil had no connection with the severity of the famine. Am I justified in coming to that conclusion?

A.—Mr. Craddock: Yes.

Q.—But although you may accept the position that the revenue is moderate still if the crops entirely fail people cannot pay rent?

A.—Mr. Craddock: No.

Q.—Have you established the fact upon enquiry that the tenants of the Central Provinces are indebted very largely?

A.—Mr. Carey: I am afraid they have been becoming so during the last few years, as they have had to meet two famines.

Q.—Is the indebtedness greater in one part than in another?

A.—It is probably greater in Nagpur where credit is better. It would not be so great in Chhatisgarh.

Q.—Is credit better in Nagpur than in Jubbulpur and Chhatisgarh?

A.—Mr. Craddock: Yes, but the indebtedness in the Jubbulpur district appears to be more marked than it was in 1893 on account of the succession of bad seasons.

Q.—Is it the general belief that indebtedness has increased?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In that part of Jubbulpur Division which you consider to be indebted would special measures be desirable to rehabilitate the cultivators?

A.—Special measures have already been taken in Damoh and are being taken in Saugor.

Q.—Measures of the character introduced by Mr. Fuller?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Besides this do you think that any measures are necessary with reference to the Government revenue?

A.—Yes. There has also been abatement of revenue; especially in the three districts of Saugor, Damoh and Jubbulpur.

Q.—Is this noticeable generally or is it noticeable only in particular distressed tracts?

A.—In particular distressed tracts, the visible sign being the reduction in the crop area.

Q.—Have you taken steps to reduce the revenue during the currency of the present settlement in those areas in which shortage of cultivation points to the necessity for such action?

A.—We have in the Jubbulpur Division. We are making enquiry elsewhere.

Q.—In the Nagpur Division are any enquiries in progress?

A.—Yes; in part of Balaghat and in Bilaspur.

Q.—Am I justified in thinking that wherever your agricultural statistics show a considerable shortage of crop area, which you attribute to the pressure of famine, you have instituted enquiries with a view to the relaxation of Government demands for the time being?

A.—Yes, wherever there is reason to think that deterioration is of a permanent character.

Q.—Have you suspended settlement operations in those districts?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you treat the tracts which show deterioration in a specially considerate manner?

A.—Yes, certainly until they recover.

Q.—What is your treatment of *takavi* advances. You have, I suppose, orders for a certain amount of money to be advanced under the Agricultural Loans Act and the Land Improvement Act?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Can you give me an idea as to what amount of money you budget for under each Act. Which of the two Acts do you consider more important?

A.—The Agricultural Loans Act.

Q.—If you found that your budget under one Act was redundant and under another deficient would you transfer from the one to the other?

A.—Yes, that is very commonly done.

Q.—What amount in an ordinary year do you budget for under these Acts?

A.—Three or four lakhs for the whole province.

Q.—Having regard to your experience in this famine do you think that a considerably larger amount of money might be usefully advanced to promote irrigation?

A.—Yes, in all rice districts.

Q.—Would you advocate an enquiry by competent officers with a view to determine what particular class of works may be usefully undertaken by landlords, the landlords being told after the enquiry has been made that Government was prepared to make advances for works thus recommended?

A.—Enquiries are required in order to provide work in anticipation of famine but are not necessary for purely *mālguzāri* works. The *mālguzārs* know quite well how to take advances and I do not think it is worth while to make further efforts in that direction.

Q.—Assuming that they do know how to take advances, would you advocate a more liberal policy of advances for land improvement? Do you think that instead of budgeting for four or five lakhs it would be better to budget for ten lakhs, and that the ten lakhs could be usefully expended?

A.—I do not think ten lakhs would be taken up.

Q.—If the money were taken up there is plenty of scope for its being usefully expended ?

A.—Yes, in the rice districts.

Q.—Would there be any scope in the Jubbulpur and Nurbudda valley districts, if not in the plateau districts ?

A.—Mr. Carey : Yes, there are two districts, Betul and Nimár, in which they use wells in certain parts where water is obtainable.

Q.—The office of the Commissioner of Settlements is now joined with that of the Director of Land Records and Agriculture ?

A.—Mr. Carey : Yes.

Q.—If you were to initiate such a policy of agricultural improvement as I have suggested do you think that your office and your establishment is sufficient to enable you to push that policy ?

A.—We would work through the Deputy Commissioners in cases like that.

Q.—Would you advocate the separation of the office of the Director of Land Records and Agriculture from that of the Commissioner of Settlements ?

A.—I am not prepared to say.

Q.—Do you think that the Director of Land Records and Agriculture should be wholly employed upon this work of agricultural improvement ?

A.—Largely.

Q.—Has the Commissioner of Settlements sufficient to do in controlling the settlement of a large province like this ?

A.—Yes ; when he has got seven settlements going at once ; at other times he would have two or three. Then he would have some leisure.

Q.—Do you not think that an officer in charge of one department is always more enthusiastic and energetic than if he has many irons in the fire ?

A.—I cannot say. It depends upon the man.

Q.—Now we come to the system of suspension or remission of revenue. I understand your system of suspension or remission of revenue is this ; that your Intelligence Department consists of a *patwári* or village officer and Revenue Inspector ; then you have got an Extra Assistant Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner ?

A.—There is also a Superintendent in charge of Land Records ; and there is an Assistant Superintendent and a *tahsildár*.

Q.—And your Superintendent of Land Records is a peripatetic officer ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What cultivated area do you allow to a *patwár's* circle ?

A.—About 5,000 acres on an average.

Q.—That would mean how many villages ?

A.—Five villages—in jungle tracts many more.

Q.—How many square miles would that represent ?

A.—Eight square miles.

Q.—He has to deal with five villages and these five villages would have a large population ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—He is able to look in ordinary times after that area ?

A.—Yes, we consider it to be about the standard area.

Q.—Suppose a severe hailstorm occurs and the crops in a considerable area are completely destroyed ; it is the business, I understand, of the *patwári* at once to give information to the *tahsildár* and the District Officer. Enquiries are then made and the question of suspension of revenue immediately comes up in every case ?

A.—Mr. Craddock : Where the area injured is less than fifty acres no claim for suspension or remission of Government revenue is taken into account.

Q.—But in *rayatwári* tracts in the case of petty holders who are directly under Government and for whom Government is responsible where 50 acres may represent the holdings of seven or eight *rayats* what do you do when their crops are destroyed ?

A.—There are no special rules but every consideration is shown as was the case in Damoh, Chanda and other places.

Q.—Although it is not provided for would it be in accordance with the spirit of your system to give suspension in cases where you find the *rayats* are seriously hit ?

A.—Yes, if suspension is not given, revenue is not pressed.

Q.—I notice that your system of calculating suspensions in *malguzári* tracts is worked on the basis that if a man has a four-anna crop no suspension should be given ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you consider that a man who has got a four-anna crop ought to pay the full Government revenue ?

A.—Yes ; in ordinary times.

Q.—Is your system of suspension and remission uniform over a large tract of country, or do you in proportioning it have regard to the circumstances of individual *malguzárs*. If you find a *malguzár* able to pay revenue from other sources irrespective of the crop of the year do you insist on his paying the revenue or do you, in determining the question of remission or suspension, have regard to the crop which has failed ?

A.—Mr. Carey : We let off the *malguzár* and he lets off the tenants.

Q.—You do not look to the circumstances of an individual revenue-payer in determining suspension. You only look to the failure of the crop ?

A.—Yes, that has always been the case in my experience.

Q.—The tenant gets remission of rent if the *malguzár* gets remission of revenue?

A.—Yes

Q.—For every rupee you suspend by way of revenue the tenant gets suspension of two rupees of rent?

A.—Mr. Craddock: Yes. We calculate how much he loses in rents and then we take a proportionate fraction of the revenue.

Q.—Roughly it would be two rupees to one rupee?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In your *khassra* do you enter the tenant or the person to whom the land is sublet?

A.—We enter in one column the name of the tenant and in another the name of the person to whom it is sublet.

Q.—If the tenant has sublet his holding to another person could you distrain the crop of the sub-tenant irrespective of the fact that you do not collect rent from him?

A.—It is rather a vexed question. It has not been legally decided yet.

Q.—Do you know how the *malguzárs* deal with that question?

A.—We have got provision for it under the Tenancy Act.

Q.—May a landlord distrain the crop of the sub-tenant in liquidation of the rent due by the tenant?

A.—I am not quite certain about it. But see section 29 of the Tenancy Act, which is very seldom used by landlords.

Q.—We have been told that the tenants are much indebted, that they are completely in the hands of the money lenders who give them advances at interest varying from 12 to 24 per cent., and that the money lender always lends to individual tenants on such security as he may get, the rate of interest varying according to the character of the security; and we are desirous to know whether there is any chance of creating in this province a system of mutual assistance and mutual help in the way of Agricultural Banks. Are you familiar with the discussion on the subject of Agricultural Banks?

A.—Mr. Carey: I have read a little about them.

Q.—Very briefly the object of the Commission is to ascertain whether such an arrangement as this would have a chance of success in this province? You have to get landlords in particular tracts to combine together and start a fund of, say, Rs. 10,000, or Rs. 15,000, or Rs. 20,000; and in the villages of these landlords respectable tenants and cultivators would join together, and become members of an Agricultural Association, paying a small entrance fee to be fixed at, say, four annas to show that they belong to this association. That association may apply to the landlords' committee for an advance of, say, Rs. 500. That advance would be made to them by the landlords' committee or any other organization which might join together for the purpose of financing these small village associations. These five hundred rupees would be the capital of the village association and upon that the association would work *plus* the contribution of the entrance fees. All the persons who belong to the association then would be jointly and severally responsible for the repayment of that sum of Rs. 500 to the head association or the landlords' committee. Joint and several responsibility of the village people would be the keystone, the ordinary condition of every thing that follows. Those persons who belong to the association and are in distress would go and get advances from the association for the purpose of the improvement of their land, of cultivating the crop, of bringing that crop to the market, of purchasing manure and seed, of building wells, and of purchasing cattle, etc. These advances would be usually granted for a certain limited period, say, from harvest to harvest, but the period could be extended. The village association would borrow money from the central association at 4 per cent. and charge people who came to borrow from them 9 per cent. The difference between 4 per cent. and 9 per cent. would remain with the village association as a reserve fund, and in course of time that fund would enable the village to dispense with borrowing from the landlords' committee and would eventually belong jointly and severally to the village association, who would then be able to lend at a small rate of interest, say, 4 per cent. Would it be possible to establish such an organization for any part of this province; would it be possible to get landlords to establish such an organization? In case the landlords are backward in coming forward could you get the villagers to band themselves together to take grants from Government at 4 per cent. only? Do you think from all you know of this province that there is sufficient hope in the future to start an organization as that?

A.—Mr. Carey: It would be very instructive to try one or two experiments on behalf of Government. I do not think the *malguzárs* would give advances at 4 per cent.

Q.—You see what an enormous advantage to the *malguzárs* these associations would be? Their own rents would be immediately secured. It is true that you would have to legislate to some extent to exempt the village fund from attachment for the debt of any individual. You would have also exempt from attachment of a civil court decree all the cattle and ploughs or any thing else that has been bought with the advance obtained from these joint funds. So far it would be necessary to go but not beyond that. Would it not be worth while to give it a trial?

A.—I should like to see the experiment tried, but I have no hope that the *malguzár* would come forward with his money. At present it seems to me that there would be more borrowers than lenders.

Q.—The money would be lent for no other purpose than that connected with the improvement of land?

A.—I think that the experiment must be made with Government assistance.



Q.—Would you have it under official control?

A.—I do not think it could be started without official control. Government might start one or two organizations like this, and if they succeeded they would be the foundation on which many more can be started. If the first one or two failed then no other would be started.

Q.—When you suspend land revenue do you suspend cesses at the same time?

A.—Mr. Craddock: We used not to; but latterly, two years ago, the Government of India ordered that suspension of cesses should follow suspension of revenue.

Q.—You have your District Council?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The District Council manages various departments like the Educational and so on?

A.—Yes.

Q.—If they do not get their cesses how do they pay their pay?

A.—Many of the District Councils are hard up.

Q.—Are these cesses over and above the revenue or are they consolidated with it?

A.—They are over and above.

Q.—Are these cesses collected with the revenue?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And you pay them to the credit of Local Funds?

A.—They get  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

Q.—You collect revenue and pay a  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. cess to the credit of the District Councils. Some districts, I suppose, have deficit and some have surplus balances?

A.—Yes, there is no provincial fund.

Q.—There is a suggestion that your system of kitchen relief induced labourers to remain on kitchens and not go to labour in the fields. If that was so there would be naturally shortage in the crop cultivation. I want to make sure if that is so.

A.—Generally speaking shortage occurred in rice for want of seed but there was a large increase in the area under cheaper grains and *juari*. There was no rice seed. Bengal seed had been sown but in many cases with disastrous results.

Q.—Then the question comes in whether sufficient *takavi* was given?

A.—We gave 35 lakhs.



SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE OF MR. KESHAO SHAM RAO DEPHANDE.

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THERE was no difficulty in getting labour. But I had to pay the coolies two annas and three annas instead of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  annas and  $1\frac{3}{4}$  annas because of the Government rates. The famine was worse in 1899 than in 1897.



# EVIDENCE OF MR. SADASHEO GANPAT, EXTRA ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER.

Mr. Nicholson.—Most of the people on special relief were of the *Koshti* class, were they not?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do they weave the finer kinds of cloth?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You did not take on special relief any weavers of coarser cloths?

A.—No.

Q.—Were the fine cloths of any special character and size?

A.—Yes; they were *lanhgas*.

Q.—Were the looms used for weaving these fine cloths of any special make?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you enable the people by these looms to weave cloth of a different character to that which they were accustomed to weave?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is there any special market for the class of cloth thus made?

A.—Yes; there is.

Q.—Is it sold generally all over the country, or does it go to a particular market only?

A.—It is sold in all the country round. And also goes to Bombay, Poona, Sholapur, Ahmednagar, the Bombay Presidency, and the Berars.

Q.—Are turbans made of it?

A.—It makes *saris* for women and *dhotis* for men.

Q.—What led you to believe that the market for these cloths had been closed?

A.—The agents of shopkeepers did not come to make their yearly purchases owing to plague and scarcity. The market was dull and prices fell.

Q.—Had the merchants who dealt in these articles stocks in their warehouses?

A.—Yes, and they would not purchase more.

Q.—Did you examine their warehouses to see that they had that stock?

A.—Yes; and they were so glutted with goods that they were not willing to take any more.

Q.—Explain to me your procedure of giving relief?

A.—I went personally and enquired into the condition of the weavers, and found that some had no work on their looms, and no food in their houses. Such people were admitted to relief. They applied to the Secretary of the shop to be admitted to relief. Advances were made to them for the manufacture of cloth through middlemen, who were made responsible that a particular amount of cloth was manufactured in a particular time. This was taken in adjustment of the advances made to them.

Q.—Did you make advances in cash?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Not in material?

A.—No.

Q.—How often were the advances made and the cloths brought in for adjustment?

A.—Once or twice a month. As soon as they brought cloth, advances were made.

Q.—Was there any limit to the amount of cloth which a man might weave?

A.—There was no limit. Money value was put in, and we made advances for a certain amount.

Q.—How did you calculate that amount?

A.—We gave Rs. 15 per loom, and then the people brought cloth in adjustment of the amount.

Q.—I understand from another part of your answer that the middlemen were able to appropriate part of the cash advance to repay themselves for advances which they had previously made to the weaver and which were still outstanding.

A.—Out of the advance of Rs. 15 the middlemen possibly paid the weaver Rs. 14 only?

Q.—Or Rs. 12?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Or 10?

A.—No; never as little as that.

Q.—Are you sure that anything of the kind happened?

A.—I think it did.

Q.—How did you satisfy yourself?

A.—I went and made personal inquiries.

Q.—Did it also happen that some of the really destitute were not able to get work because they could not sufficiently fee the middlemen?

A.—Sometimes it so happened.

Q.—What became of these very destitute people?

A.—We found another middleman for them.

Q.—Were they in any way thrown on gratuitous relief in consequence of this action?

A.—No.

Q.—What was the percentage allowed to the middlemen as profit?

A.—One anna in the rupee.

Q.—6½ lakhs were spent on this special relief?

A.—Rs. 6,77,000.

Q.—How much of that has been recovered?

A.—Nothing, excepting in the shape of the cloth taken in adjustment.

Q.—Have you valued the stock of cloth?

A.—Yes; it is roughly valued.

Q.—On what basis have you valued it? At normal prices?

A.—No; just below the normal.

Q.—What basis have you taken for normal?

A.—If the raw material cost Rs. 3, the price of the labour to be paid to the worker would be Rs. 0-12-0, the middleman's charge would be three annas, and the cost of the whole would amount to Rs. 3-15-0. The *sári* was therefore valued at Rs. 3-15-0 or Rs. 4 or sometimes Rs. 4-2-0; it depended upon the material used.

Q.—At what price would the same cloth be sold in ordinary times?

A.—For Rs. 4-8-0 or Rs. 4-12-0.

Q.—You had valued all the stock under normal prices?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What was your stock value?

A.—The total value of the stock in Nágpur is Rs. 1,71,152.

Q.—I understand that Rs. 6,77,000 were spent?

A.—I was only speaking of the stock in Nágpur; the value of the stock in the Provinces is Rs. 6,50,000.

Q.—There is therefore a small deficit only.

A.—Yes; but that will be made up.

Q.—In what way?

A.—By further adjustment.

Q.—Then you have outstanding advances?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You think that the whole amount will be made up?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Then the operations will cost practically nothing?

A.—Nothing, but the cost of establishment.

Q.—What will that be?

A.—There is a clerk, a paid appraiser, a *muntin*, and an inspector.

Q.—How much will go for establishment?

A.—The total loss is put down at 2½ per cent. allowing for cloth unsold.

Q.—Have you experience of any other system different to the one described?

A.—No.

Q.—Of what count was the cotton used by the weavers?

A.—I cannot tell you.

Q.—They ordinarily use 30 or 40?

A.—No; 60, 70 or 80.

Q.—That requires some delicacy of handling?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is the cloth made used for turbans?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do they make fine turbans?

A.—Yes.

Q.—They use a mixture of 60 and 80 counts?

A.—Sometimes of 80 and 120.

Q.—For that delicacy of touch is necessary?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think there is any other method of relief which could be adopted and which could enable these people to live without adopting this special form of relief?

A.—I do not know; they are unfitted for manual labour; they are weak.

Q.—They are not accustomed to work in the sun?

A.—No.

Q.—Could they not work in the harvest fields and cultivate?

A.—No, they could not; they cannot do any other kind of work.

The President.—Are ordinary weavers, those who weave coarse cloth, in the habit of working in the fields?

A.—No.

Q.—Would they lose by working in the fields the delicacy of touch which is necessary for their particular trade?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Some weavers did go upon relief works?

A.—Yes; they did go.

Q.—When famine was over, did they return to their ordinary avocation of weavers?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was there any sensible injury to their dexterity in weaving?

A.—I did not remark that.

Mr. Nicholson.—Have you a class of weavers who habitually work in the fields weaving coarse cloth in the intervals?

A.—No.

Q.—You say in your statement that there was a fear that merchants would form a ring and not take the cloth except at certain rates?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think they would succeed?

A.—No.





RAI BAHÁDUR PANDIT HANUMÁN PARSHAD, MÁLGUZÁR, JUBBULPORE DISTRICT.

(In Hindustani.)

Mr. Bourdillon.—Of how many villages are you *málguzár*?

A.—Eighteen.

Q.—Have you seen the famine relief works?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Taking this year with the year of the previous famine, which do you think was the worse?

A.—This year was the worse; there has been no wheat these three years.

Q.—What steps were taken for relief?

A.—Tanks were dug; dams were constructed by Government.

Q.—Were they managed by you?

A.—No; by the famine charge officers.

Q.—No one died?

A.—No one died for want of food.

Q.—Was there kitchen relief?

A.—Yes.

Q.—At first very few people went to kitchens?

A.—Bráhmans and Kshattris did not go to the kitchens. The lower classes, such as *Chamárs* and *Gonds*, went there.

Q.—Gradually the number increased?

A.—Yes, gradually.

Q.—They became accustomed to the kitchens?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You say you yourself did not take any steps for famine relief?

A.—In the last famine we, the *málguzárs*, took steps; but in this famine Government took all the steps.

Q.—Is there a necessity for tanks?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did the people willingly take *takávi*?

A.—Not with willingness, because they did not get it on easy terms.

Q.—The *takávi* is given through *málguzárs*?

A.—Yes, but people did not take it willingly, because it added to their previous indebtedness, and they were afraid that their estates and their bullocks would be sold.

Q.—Are they not willing to take *takávi* from Government?

A.—They are willing to take it if they get it on low terms of interest.

Q.—Was there a good crop last year?

A.—Yes; the *rabi* was good.

Q.—Would you prefer kitchen or grain doles?

A.—Grain doles.

Q.—Are you of opinion that some of the people going to kitchens were not in need of relief?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The Commission want to know if people were unwilling to go to the relief works which were distant from their villages?

A.—Yes.

Q.—As regards the "ticket system," do you think that a man without a ticket should not be allowed admission?

A.—Yes.

Q.—That is your suggestion?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Will you support Government in this matter?

A.—Yes, it is in the interest of my fellow-countrymen.

Q.—Will all the *málguzárs* help us?

A.—Yes, nobody will refuse.

Q.—Would you prefer to have large works or small works?

A.—I think small works would be more useful, because people can go to work and return to their homes.

Q.—Should there be small works throughout the time?

A.—Yes: tanks may be dug; dams may be constructed.

Q.—Could work be done during the rains?

A.—Nothing can be done during the rains?

Q.—Is there not sufficient work for the agriculturists?

A.—Some labourers can be employed, not all.

Q.—Then who should protect them?

A.—Providence and Government.

*The President.*—Could the agriculturists afford to employ a great many of the labourers?

*A.*—No; they had not sufficient money to employ many labourers, and therefore they worked themselves.

*Mr. Bourdillon.*—Would the people have died if there had been no relief works to help them?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—From whom did the agriculturists get money?

*A.*—From the *mālguzārs*.

*Q.*—People are more or less indebted?

*A.*—Yes; 95 per cent. are indebted.

*Q.*—Did they borrow on their own separate responsibility?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—They did not borrow jointly. Suppose 25 or 30 people went together, could they not jointly borrow money on a low rate of interest?

*A.*—No. It is not the custom to borrow jointly; and even if that were done, the people would not get money at a low rate of interest.

#### FURTHER EVIDENCE OF RAI BAHÁDUR PANDIT HANUMÁN PARSHAD, MÁLGUZAR, JUBBULPORE DISTRICT.

*The President.*—You told us the other day you were *mālguzār* of 13 villages?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—What are the chief crops in your villages?

*A.*—*Rabi*, wheat and gram.

*Q.*—Is seven or eight maunds of *judr* a good average outturn?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Are eight maunds produced sometimes?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—At what rate would the produce sell?

*A.*—Prices fluctuate; but you may take roughly Rs. 2-8-0 per maund or 12 or 14 seers a rupee.

*Q.*—Then for eight maunds it is Rs. 20?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—The straw is also sold?

*A.*—Yes; we did not sell wheat straw; gram we sold at Rs. 2 or Rs. 2-4 0 per maund.

*Q.*—Do you get Rs. 15 or Rs. 16 on the average for an acre of land?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—You get Re. 1 or Re. 1-8-0 per acre as rent?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Rs. 2 also?

*A.*—Yes, sometimes.

*Q.*—Do you make any further profit out of your *zaminḍāri*?

*A.*—No.

*Q.*—Do you produce cotton?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—How much do you pay to Government out of the money you get from the *ryat*?

*A.*—Fifty-five per cent. or 60 per cent.

*Q.*—Not more than 60 per cent.?

*A.*—No. We pay that *plus* other expenses.

*Q.*—Government takes a larger portion, half the portion of what you get?

*A.*—More than half.

*Q.*—An acre of ground is worth Rs. 15 or Rs. 16, and Government takes Re. 1 out of Rs. 15 or Rs. 16? Then Government takes very little?

*A.*—I have not calculated.

*Q.*—Government takes 6 per cent. of the gross produce? Do you think that is too much?

*A.*—I cannot say it is too much. If there are good seasons and good harvests, then it would not be high. But it is high at present, because the district has experienced a series of bad seasons.

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MR. A. E. LOWRIE, FOREST OFFICER, CHANDA DISTRICT.

- The Presidents.*—You are a Forest Officer of the Chanda district, Mr. Lowrie ?
- A.—Yes, sir.
- Q.—Is there a large number of aboriginal tribes in Chanda ?
- A.—A very large number.
- Q.—Were you in these forests during the last famine ?
- A.—No, sir.
- Q.—Were these forest tribes badly hit in 1899 ?
- A.—Yes.
- Q.—Would you just tell us very briefly the scheme of relief that was organized for them ?
- A.—In the first instance, early in October, we started fodder operations.
- Q.—That is to say, cutting fodder and exporting it ?
- A.—Cutting fodder and stacking it.
- Q.—Did you employ the people in any other sort of work ?
- A.—They were employed on road works chiefly at that time.
- Q.—Did you find any one unwilling to come long distances from their villages ?
- A.—Yes. This place is the centre of the Marigonds. Not the Rajgonds. They are found everywhere. But the Marigonds are not found at the North.
- Q.—Were you able to overcome that disinclination on their part ?
- A.—At first when we opened the forest we opened them for roots.
- Q.—Did you make a collection of the various sorts of forest products on which the people lived ?
- A.—Chiefly the roots of wild yams. Early in September they were collecting these roots in large quantities.
- Q.—Do they collect these roots in ordinary years as a diet ?
- A.—To a small extent.
- Q.—Well, altogether how many of these men had you on your relief ?
- A.—Of the Marigonds we had about 2,000 and of the Banjáras we had about 6,000.
- Q.—To what general conclusion in regard to the relief of these forest tribes did your experience lead you to form: were you of opinion that it was necessary to bring relief close to their villages or was relief established within a radius of 10 miles enough ?
- A.—We got them to come further than that. We got them over 20 miles. I found some difficulty at first, but my range officer was a very good man; the Maris were very nervous.
- Q.—Were they willing to take any sort of work ? Were they ready to take work on roads ?
- A.—Yes; they did most excellent work on roads.
- Q.—So that practically once you got them together, you had no difficulty ?
- A.—No.
- Q.—Did you pay them cash ?
- A.—We paid them cash.
- Q.—Did you open grain shops for them ?
- A.—We had a bazar on every Sunday.
- Q.—Will you tell me the tribes you dealt with ?
- A.—The Marigonds and the Rajgonds; and we also had some Banjáras on the works.
- Q.—Did women and children come on the relief works ?
- A.—The people brought all their families.
- Q.—On your works had you other people excepting wild tribes ?
- A.—Others came.
- Q.—And the Gonds did not make any objection to labour with them ?
- A.—Absolutely none.
- Q.—Practically you found no special arrangements necessary ?
- A.—No special arrangements were necessary.
- Q.—Did the people always desire at night to get back to their villages ?
- A.—No; we had a special place built for them: the ordinary arrangement of hutting.
- Q.—The result of your evidence is, so far as your experience goes, there is no difficulty in dealing with the forest tribes, and that no modification of the general relief system is necessary ?
- A.—Absolutely none.



MAJOR HENDLEY, I.M.S., CIVIL SURGEON, NIMAR.

Mr. Bourdillon.—I see that you had cholera in the district ?

A.—Yes ; it was prevalent for 11 months in the year. It began in September 1899 and continued throughout the cold weather, to a slight degree. There was a very large increase in June and also in July. It was rather worse in August, and fell off slightly in September.

Q.—Was that mostly in the villages or on works, or where ?

A.—The amount of cholera on works was a negligible quantity.

Q.—Because I suppose you had the control of the water-supply ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—It was bad in the villages ?

A.—Yes, and in the kitchens. In some of the large kitchens there were from 3,000 to 4,000 people congregated.

Q.—As regards the cholera in kitchens, do you think it was due to bad or indifferent food ?

A.—I think it was due to the flies. They were simply horrible and swarmed on to the food. The *dāl* and *bhāt* became black with them, and no doubt large quantities were served up with the food. Sometimes the food was served up on the same leaves as platters again and again.

Q.—Is that a fair statement of what happened in most kitchens, that want of sanitary precautions ?

A.—I don't think it could be called a neglect of sanitary precautions. Where food was being served for thousands of people, it would be a difficult matter to keep the flies off. Later on we began to distribute dry food, and things improved.

Q.—Do you think that the rice imported from Beugal disagreed with the people ?

A.—I think the people would do better with the usual *chapātis* and *dāl*.

Q.—Did you find a larger percentage of sick among the immigrants than among the people of the district ?

A.—Very much larger.

Q.—They came in a bad state across the border ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—They came mostly to your kitchens ? Were there many of them ?

A.—At one time we took a census. There were from 30 to 40 per cent.



## MR. J. B. LEVENTHORPE, EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, HOSHANGABAD.

*The President.*—What districts have you under your control ?

A.—Betul and Nimar.

Q.—Had you under you a District Surveyor ?

A.—I had not a District Engineer officer. We divided each district into sub-divisions. The Famine Works Superintendent was a Staff Corps man. Each district was divided into three or four sub-divisions.

Q.—The system was from the commencement the intermediate system ?

A.—Practically everywhere.

Q.—You had programmes made out beforehand ?

A.—I believe so, I was on furlough at the time.

Q.—Had you programmes with estimates of relief works ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you undertake your works without proper estimates ?

A.—We had rough plans made ; and had the works located.

Q.—You proceeded on the basis of charges : so many persons under a particular officer ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The officer was called the charge officer ?

A.—No, he was called the Officer-in-charge : charge officer is a civil man ; a different man entirely.

Q.—What officer was responsible for the control and administration of a particular relief work on which 5,000 people were kept ?

A.—The Officer-in-charge.

Q.—He had under him an establishment ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The Officer-in-charge was a civil officer ?

A.—He was sent from the Civil Department.

Q.—Was he placed at your disposal ?

A.—Yes, entirely.

Q.—Entirely under the Public Works Department ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—All the establishment from the Officer-in-charge down to the gang *muharrir* was under your control ?

A.—Everyone except the Medical Officer who looked after the hospital and kitchens.

Q.—Could you transfer this Medical Officer from place to place ?

A.—No.

Q.—From one work to another ?

A.—No. We had to apply to the Civil Surgeon for that. I would not say that we had not the power, but we did not do so.

Q.—If you had not the power to do it, is it proper that you should have it ?

A.—It would be a good thing in cases.

Q.—It is not desirable that all officers engaged in the carrying on of your administration should be entirely controlled by the Public Works Department ?

A.—I think so decidedly.

Q.—You worked under the intermediate system ; that is to say, at the end of the day the work was marked out and ~~carried~~ up ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Were the diggers and carriers paid according to the amount of work done ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What was the number which constituted a gang ?

A.—That depended on the nature of the work ; we had different sorts of works.

Q.—If you had a long lead you wanted an extra number of carriers ?

A.—Quite so : you are talking as if we had done nothing but earthwork.

Q.—Your gangs were employed according to your programme of tank work or road work ?

A.—Quite so, as a matter of fact we had very little tank work ; it was mostly road and railway work.

Q.—Did you treat children as adults ?

A.—At the commencement the children were reckoned from 8 to 12, and from 12 to 16 as working children ; at 16 we took them as adults.

Q.—You gave them second class ~~pass~~ if they were over 16 ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—The working children formed part of the gang ?

A.—Yes ; whenever possible we made separate gangs of children altogether.

Q.—Occasionally they formed part of the gang ?

A.—When they did earthwork.

Q.—I see that no working children were fined ; they always received full wage no matter how much work they did. If the earnings of a gang depended on the work done and if a working child forms part of a gang, and if he was always to be paid full wage no matter what he did, how did you manage ?

A.—Theoretically the working child was not to get less than the full wage ; in practice I don't know if he got it. That is the great reason why I like to keep the children in a separate gang. If in a gang a child worked less the order was to pay him the full wage first and then distribute the rest to the other labourers of that gang. This was done when I was there ; but I doubt if it was done when I was away. Gangs generally consisted of members of a family.

Q.—Was there any necessity for paying the working children full wages if they did not do full work ?

A.—Those were the orders.

Q.—Was there any reason why a working boy, who did not do his full task should be paid a full wage for doing a part of his task ?

A.—No.

Q.—The task was easy, and within the capacity of a working child ?

A.—In ordinary earthwork when there is no long lead.

Q.—You are not in favour of paying working children full wages when they do not do full work ?

A.—Not to healthy children.

Q.—If they were not healthy children they would go into a different category ?

A.—Yes, altogether.

Q.—Do you think that under the intermediate system, upon which you worked, the payments made were adequate for all purposes of relief ?

A.—Yes, in this famine, but not in the last famine.

Q.—Were you in the last famine ?

A.—Yes, in Jubbulpur.

Q.—You consider that under the circumstances you had in the last famine the intermediate system would not do ?

A.—No.

Q.—Because the people coming on relief works were in a reduced condition ?

A.—Very much ; they were quite unfit for work.

Q.—Can any modification be made in the present intermediate system ? Do you think that the task can be adjusted to the capacity of the people ?

A.—That is practically what we have done.

Q.—Did you not find it difficult to change from the code task system to the intermediate system ; it is easy to change from the intermediate system to the code task system ?

A.—I think it is perfectly easy.

Q.—You had no difficulty in doing that ?

A.—I never had experience of that—to promote the whole gang at once. They were promoted individually.

Q.—On your works had you always kitchens attached ?

A.—Yes, they were near the work ; there were two or three kitchens when the work spread out a long distance.

Q.—Did you find any difficulty in working the kitchen ?

A.—Oh, no. It is only a question of organization.

Q.—With regard to the task you began, as I understand, with the task of 70 cubic feet for soft soil. Did you find that an insufficient task ?

A.—I think the soil varies so enormously in some cases.

Q.—Have you ever served in Northern India ?

A.—No ; but I have been there.

Q.—How does the soft soil of your nomenclature compare with the soil which is called medium in the North-Western Provinces ?

A.—It is harder to work here.

Q.—There is ordinary earth, light earth and medium earth. Does your soft soil compare with the medium soil ?

A.—I have never worked in Northern India and I do not know it.

Q.—Your soft soil, I am not speaking as an expert, seems to be like the medium earth of the North-West.

A.—Possibly.

Q.—In the North-Western Provinces they have these tasks—i.e. 110 cubic feet and 80 cubic feet. Your soft soil is 70 cubic feet ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And 80 cubic feet is a raised task ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Compare 110 with 70 and you see the difference ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you think 70 cubic feet an insufficient task ?

A.—We often raised it.

Q.—What did you come to ?

A.—To about 90 cubic feet on an average.



Q.—Did you find that the people did the task's work of 90 cubic feet easily?  
A.—Yes, quite easily.  
Q.—Did you see people going off the works when the tasks were increased?  
A.—No. We raised the task by degrees?  
Q.—The raising of tasks had not the effect of reducing the numbers on your works?  
A.—No, if we had raised them very largely it would have reduced the numbers. We gradually raised it to 90 cubic feet.  
Q.—If you redrafted the Famine Code, would you adhere to 70 cubic feet of the initial task, or would you raise it to 80 or 90?  
A.—I would raise it.  
Q.—To what?  
A.—To about 80 cubic feet as initial task as the soil we have to deal with is enormously different in different places.  
Q.—Is it easier to work black cotton soil than *murum*?  
A.—Working black cotton soil in the middle of May is something like cutting bricks, but after a few hours rain fall it is quite easy to work it; the soil varies so much.  
Q.—You had no test-works?  
A.—I do not know. I did not come till December.  
Q.—Had you attached to your public works any system of village works?  
A.—No. We had nothing to do with that.  
Q.—Did you not even mark them out?  
A.—I did not. I do not remember ever doing it.  
Q.—There was no system to take levels for tanks?  
A.—We did a lot of that. The Deputy Commissioner proposed to dig tanks which were called *annexes*.  
Q.—They were a part of your work?  
A.—Yes.  
Q.—I read from the report of Mr. St. Clair that the percentage of full wage actually earned is considerably under 100 in the following places:—

At Hoshangabad	...	...	...	81	to	90
In Betul; and	...	...	...	88	to	92
In Nimar	...	...	...	71	to	75

That is to say, the workers really got on with 10 per cent. less wages than they could have earned.  
A.—I hardly think these figures are correct.  
Q.—They have been revised?  
A.—I used always to take careful notes in my note-book while I was visiting the camps, but I cannot find any gang which has been fined more than 12 per cent.—that is the maximum I can find.  
Q.—I might infer that 90 per cent. of the full wages would be the living wage?  
A.—I think so.  
Q.—In your opinion the wage prescribed under the rules was redundant or excessive to the extent of 10 per cent.?  
A.—I should say that the wages were very ample from start to finish.

# FURTHER EVIDENCE OF MR. J. B. LEVENTHORPE, EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, HOSHANGABAD.

*The President.*—In your evidence, Mr. Leventhorpe, I think you said that practically all the men were classed in one class, viz., the digger's class, and that all the women were classed in the carrier's class and the working children were also included in the carrier's class? Is that a correct statement of your evidence on that point?  
A.—No, you asked me about the numbers that earned the carrier's and digger's wage. I find that in my district 16 per cent. of the total of adult males earned the carrier's wage. In other divisions it was a great deal more.  
Q.—The question was as regards the giving of the same wage to men and women. According to the custom of the country women are not paid the same wages as men. Other witnesses have told us that. If the case is really this that the men were classed as diggers, and the women were classed as carriers then your arrangement approximated to a sexual distinction.  
A.—You did not ask me that question.  
Q.—What is your experience on that point?  
A.—To some extent it is correct, but in my division we had orders that any man employed in carrying broken metal from the quarries, of which I had many in my district, was to be classed as a carrier. In fact we had so many male carriers and so few diggers that we had to put some of the carriers on the digger's work.  
Q.—And they were paid the carrier's wage?  
A.—Yes, on metal work.  
Q.—If they were engaged as diggers on earthwork were they paid carrier's wages?  
A.—No, unless they were too feeble or old to do digger's work.  
Q.—Of the adult males on your earthwork, what proportion would you say was classed as diggers and what proportion was classed as carriers?  
A.—Almost the whole were classed as diggers.

Q.—Almost all the males were classed as diggers?

A.—Yes, on earthwork and they actually did dig.

Q.—Did it happen owing to the want of diggers that some of the infirm adults were employed as diggers?

A.—Not much, sir; very little. The fact was that we had very few infirm men.

Q.—So that it practically confirms the usual practice, viz., that a man received more wages than a woman?

A.—Yes, in the case of earthwork.

Q.—Coming to the breaking of stone, did the same rule prevail?

A.—At the commencement of the famine it did, then we had orders that men who were doing carrier's work were to have the wages of the carriers.

Q.—Did you have many men doing carrier's work?

A.—As few as possible.

Q.—When it was inevitable that men should do carrier's work they got carrier's wage?

A.—Yes, that was from February.

Q.—Before that?

A.—They were paid digger's wages, but we made them do more work.

MR. J. B. LEVENTHORPE, EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, HOSHANGABAD, AND  
MR. G. G. WHITE, EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, JUBBULPORE DIVISION.

*The President.*—I want, gentlemen, to work out this question of the subordination of officers on public works. How did it work out in practice under your control? You, gentlemen, were Executive Engineers of the division and, as I understand, in this Province there is no Engineer officer having charge of the district. You had, for the purposes of the famine, Sub-Divisional Officers. The Sub-Divisional Officers had no territorial jurisdiction. On works they had under them the staff, the head of which was the Officer-in-charge; under the Officer-in-charge they had the works officer; then *muharrirs*, gangmen, hospital assistants, etc. It has been stated, as you have heard, that to the Officer-in-charge the Deputy Commissioner might issue an order regarding a particular subject. The Executive Engineer might also issue an order to the Officer-in-charge through the Sub-Divisional Officer on that same subject. If the subject happened to be one connected with sanitary matters, the Civil Surgeon might also do so. So it was possible—I do not say it happened, but it was possible—that three contradictory orders might be received by the Officer-in-charge. The reconciliation of these orders would entirely depend upon the good relations which existed between the Deputy Commissioner, the Civil Surgeon, and the Executive Engineer. Is that a correct statement of what conceivably might happen?

A.—I think it is an extreme case. You have omitted the Famine Works Superintendent. Mr. Mayes forgot to mention him.

Q.—But such a state of things as I have mentioned might conceivably occur?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Now, as regards the Famine Works Superintendent. If the Deputy Commissioner took strong exception to the manner in which something was being done, did the Famine Superintendent, after communication with him, go and settle things?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Had the Famine Superintendent the power, I mean, of overruling the Executive Engineer and Civil Surgeon in such a case?

A.—No, the Famine Works Superintendent was subordinate to the Executive Engineer.

Q.—He had no power of overruling?

A.—No.

Q.—He was also a subordinate of the Deputy Commissioner in regard to the general control of the work that the Deputy Commissioner has?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Suppose the Executive Engineer considered that it was desirable to stop a particular work—~~even~~ a certain arrangement was made, could that be done independently of the Deputy Commissioner? For instance, you are Executive Engineer of Hoshangabad and you considered that it is not desirable to work in a certain locality, could you alter the work without communication with the Deputy Commissioner?

A.—All the works were sanctioned by the Commissioner and their actual location by the Chief Commissioner?

Q.—Say that you considered that a certain work was overcrowded and wanted to reduce the numbers, could you open a tank work in the neighbourhood without communication with the Deputy Commissioner?

A.—No, not unless it was one of the works that we had previously arranged for with him.

Q.—In what matter did you exercise independent control of the Deputy Commissioner?

A.—The Deputy Commissioner gave us notice that he wanted a work opened on such and such a date.

Q.—In what matters, ~~at~~ sorts of work, did you act independently of the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner?

A.—When we started a work, we carried it on till we got orders to stop it.

Q.—During the progress of a work, suppose there was a want of grain, could you obtain it without communication with the Deputy Commissioner?

A.—We never had occasion to.

Q.—No, but would that be within your function?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Say, a work's subordinate was getting on badly with the other establishment, could you remove him?

A.—Yes.

Q.—In the same way, with regard to Hospital Assistants, could you transfer them from one work to another?

A.—I am not certain of that. We always did it after communication with the Civil Surgeon.

Q.—Say that you found the labourers idling, you had come to a stratum of soft soil, were you justified on your own authority in altering the scale of wages?

A.—Yes, in altering the task the Deputy Commissioner settled the grain rates.

Q.—Say they were working on soft *moorum*, could you raise the task from 70 to 100 feet?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You were supposed to have the power of adjusting the tasks?

A.—Yes, entirely. The Deputy Commissioner told us the grain rates were so much and we did the rest.

Q.—Had you power in regard to sanitary matters? Say a hospital was wanted here or a latrine there. Did you do everything in connection with the organization of the work?

A.—Yes, everything.

Q.—Was it clearly recognized by your department that you were bound to obey the orders of the Deputy Commissioner in all matters except in regard to the mere measuring up of works?

A.—I think it was. We had no trouble.

Q.—The Deputy Commissioner was supreme in all matters connected with the administration of his district?

A.—Yes.

Mr. White.—Yes, in all matters.

Q.—There is no doubt upon that point?

A.—No.

SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE OF MR. NAWAL SINGH, MĀLGUZĀR  
OF JABGAON, HARSUD, NIMAR DISTRICT.

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I own 5 villages. The famine was greater in 1899 than in 1897.

The rents run—*dofasli* Rs. 3 per *bigha*; wheat Re. 1-8—others Re. 1 and 12 annas per *pakka bigha*.

Cotton yields about Rs. 20 a *bigha*. The rent is about Re. 1-8.

The famine arrangements were excellent.



SETH NARSINGH DAS, MAHÁJAN AND MÁLGUZÁR OF CHHINDWARA.

*The President.*—You are a *málguzár*?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Of how many villages?

*A.*—Of fifteen villages.

*Q.*—You are a *mahájan*?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Are the *rayats* in your villages greatly indebted?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—What is the rate of interest?

*A.*—Eight annas to one rupee. The bigger money-lender charges less interest than smaller men.

*Q.*—Can ten or fifteen persons jointly borrow money at a low rate of interest?

*A.*—No, that is not the custom.

*Q.*—It is not customary to take money on the security of another man?

*A.*—This is rarely done.

*Q.*—How much does an acre and-a-half of land in your *zamindári* produce?

*A.*—That varies. From the land that is well cultivated you get more produce; while on the land to which no manure is given the produce is less.

*Q.*—Generally speaking how much *jowari* is produced in an acre and-a-half?

*A.*—About four candies.

*Q.*—What will be its value?

*A.*—Rs. 28.

*Q.*—How much is paid as rent?

*A.*—Rs. 6 or Rs. 8.

*Q.*—The *málguzár* takes six rupees from the tenant?

*A.*—No.

*Q.*—How much does he take?

*A.*—From the ground which yields four candies.

*Q.*—Yes.

*A.*—There is no particular rule. In some cases the rent is Rs. 3, sometimes 6, 7 or 8?

*Q.*—On an average?

*A.*—Rs. 3.

*Q.*—So that out of nine parts the *zamindár* takes one part?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—The Government takes from the *zamindár* out of this one part, 40 per cent.?

*A.*—No, the *málguzár* takes 40 per cent. and gives Government 60 per cent.

*Q.*—You take one-ninth from the tenant and pay to the Government 60 per cent. of that one-ninth?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Do you know anything about Agricultural Banks?

*A.*—Yes, I have heard about them.

*Q.*—What have you heard about them?

*A.*—I read about them when the Punjab Bill was passed.

*Q.*—What is your idea of Agricultural Banks?

*A.*—The tenant will be able to get money at a low rate of interest.

*Q.*—Who would give the money?

*A.*—Government or the people who may start the banks. I understood it would be started by Government.

*Q.*—Do you think from your experience that ten or twenty *zamindárs* will be able to raise Rs. 10,000 by means of shares to form a company to lend money for the purchase of bullocks? Can that be done?

*Q.*—Will the *rayat* use that money?

*A.*—Yes, the *málguzár* understands how to manage that.

*Q.*—Do you expect the *málguzár* will be prepared to advance money to the people?

*A.*—Yes.

*Q.*—Then the experiment is worth trying?

*A.*—Yes.





Answers by W. N. MAW, Esq., I. C. S, Officiating Deputy Commissioner, Damoh,  
to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

Q. 1.—The crops of 1897-98 were good, but rice was the only really good crop of 1898-99. In consequence of this village relief had to be given in the haveli in the hot weather and rains of 1899. It was only closed for a few months before the famine of 1899-1900 declared itself, *i. e.*, in October 1899. Thus the situation when the rains of 1899 commenced was probably worse than in any other district; for I am not aware that village relief had to be given in the hot-weather of 1899 elsewhere.

Q. 2.—I have not got the figures with me in camp.

Q. 3.—The rains ceased about the end of August, thus causing the kharif crops to wither.

Q. 6.—Kitchens were used as tests.

Q. 7.—The machinery of relief was not set in motion until kitchens began to draw. This was a strict rule.

Q. 8.—Kitchens were opened first. They attracted considerable numbers at first in only one small rice tract in the east of the district. When the distress in this circle (Kumhari) became unmistakable, tank works were opened under civil management as measures of relief. Admission was only by ticket, and the extent of the distress was easily gauged by the number of applications for admission and the importunity of the applicants.

Q. 9.—I did not take charge of the district until the end of December 1899. But I know that ample preparations were made in good time.

Q. 10.—Kitchens were the backbone of the relief system. Large public works were contemplated also at first, but were abandoned. They would have been the existing Public Works (Department roads. Village works were only opened in the most severely affected rice tracts. In these tracts it is possible to make a tank in almost every village. They were opened as required, the location being made only after the opening of the work had been decided on.

Q. 11.—There were no test works or poor-houses. Kitchens were the test, and local works not tests but measures of relief. Government forests were opened in the beginning of the famine, but the money raised from private charity was not spent until later.

Q. 12.—There are six Revenue Inspectors' Circles in the district. These were subdivided into 'Circle Offices' appointed to each in October or November.

Q. 13.—Will the *rayat* be reluctant to give the village-relief lists. The two Tahsildars were

A.—Yes, the *malguzar* tribal and the local employment of labour and attempted to

Q.—Do you expect during the last eight years had been too unfavourable to

A.—Yes. in this direction. The village-relief lists were really

Q.—Then the experiment is well patterned out.

A.—Yes.

issued as loans under the Land Improvement Loans Act. The distress did not become acute before then. They were to construct embankments to their fields. They were given for wells.

Irrigation wells is uncommon in the district.

not the test, but kitchens.

are ready for a large public work in December, but with admission by ticket being preferred.

in the most severely distressed tracts where the poorest would not be sufficient.

Q. 53.—They were all tank works.

Q. 54.—They were conducted under my supervision, the Assistant Commissioner being in special charge. They were all under direct management.

Q. 56.—Tasks were exacted and the work measured every night. Men got 1 anna 6 pies a day, women 1 anna 3 pies, and children from 3 pies to 1 anna. Employment was only given to labourers and cultivators with a limited number of cattle and to artisans.

Q. 57.—This system of selection was worked with very happy results. The tickets were given by the Circle Officer. But for selection the works would have become overcrowded.

Q. 59.—In my opinion only small village relief works should be opened in thinly populated tracts where the distress is not universal and not very severe. Good management is easy if the numbers are kept below 1,000 and full tasks can be regularly exacted. In thickly populated tracts it would be difficult to find a sufficient number of suitable men to act as Officers-in-charge, as the number of works would necessarily be large. I prefer small village works to public works, because it is so much easier to prevent and detect malpractices and embezzlements. It is also easier to regulate the admission and measure the work done. The machinery of a public work is in my opinion too cumbrous. It is probably true that the field for dishonesty in a work increases directly as the square of the size.

Q. 60.—There are a good many Gonds in the district. Kitchens were used as tests with them as with other people. They were more backward in accepting relief than other people. Many of them up to the end refused to eat *kichri*. They were carefully watched, and when it was considered that a sufficiently severe test had been applied and had failed, owing to their prejudices, they were given village-relief. This system was in my opinion quite successful. Their reluctance to eat cooked food was not allowed to do them any permanent harm. It saved money to Government.

NOTE.—In one or two cases Gonds

Q. 6r.—Forest and Gaddam.

Q. 61.—Forest and garden works were provided work to the Forest Divisional Office and by results.

Q. 62.—No

Q. 62.—No

Q. 63 - Advances of Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 were given to weavers. The weavers produced cloth made from the assistance chased for distribution to the poor.

Q. 6/4.—These weavers were in parts of the district where  
This for a of relief was confined for the most part to Dam  
larger villages benefited by it also.

Q. 65.—These measures were only on a small scale. They were not successful from the point of view of relief. The cloth could not be recovered in full. If this had been done, the advances could have been recovered in full. If this had been done, the cost nothing. The cloth was purchased at hazard and sold at a loss. The famine was very little, but this was not the case. But this was not the case until the stock had been disposed of.

Q. 66.—Fodder and water were sufficient in the necessary. Cattle disease broke out, but a Veterinary A dis ease disappeared at once.

Q. 67.—There were no such tracts.

Q. 68.—There were no dependants admitted to the workhouse under years, and they were given milk.

Q. 69.—Kitchens were the principal source of disease because they carried with them the very severe and fatal diseases of all but the very lowest castes to eat cooked food.

70.—Admission to kitchens was free when dis

Q. 71.—There were no poor-houses.

Q. 74.—In theory a kitchen was expected to serve a radius of three miles. Excluding the forest area, this would have given 75 kitchens to the district. But if this limit had been adhered to, it would have been necessary to limit the number of attendants by means of tickets. As admission was free, it was necessary to increase the number of kitchens up to 135: otherwise nearly all the kitchens would have become overcrowded. A number exceeding three or four hundred was incompatible with good management. Nearly all the kitchens were opened before the rains broke in the rice tracts. In the haveli the rabi crops carried the people on until May, and it would have been waste of money to open kitchens there in large numbers before June or July.

Q. 75.—The rations were:—

For a man or woman	...	...	9 chittaks
For a child 10—14	...	...	7½ "
" 7—10	...	...	6 "
" 4—7	...	...	4½ "
" 0—4	...	...	3 "

but small babies were given milk, or milk mixed with wheat flour, or Mellin's food. Meals were distributed once a day at fixed times, *i. e.*, at 1 P. M. In large kitchens the children were fed at 1 P. M. and the adults an hour later. Babies were given milk three times a day. The people were compelled to feed on the premises.

Q. 76.—No limits of distance was fixed, and kitchens were opened close to relief works. When a man on a kitchen was given a ticket to a work he was refused food at the kitchen. People preferred to work than to eat *khichri*.

Q. 77.—Admission was at first restricted. Among other tests, tenants with over a certain number of cattle were not admitted. Afterwards admission was made free to all under the Officiating Commissioner's orders.

Q. 78.—I did not take charge prepared by the Circle Officers and checked by the Commissioner, Tahsildars and myself, but at no fixed intervals. Chief duties of officers on tour. The lists were checked

Q. 10.—Kitchens were visited a village, unless for special reason, were contemplated also at the existing Public Works in the most severely affected in almost every village. They the opening of the work had been

Q. 11.—There were no tests but measures of than half the kotwars in the district. These men could of the famine, but the money of kitchens they were required to report vital statistics four months

Q. 12.—There are six Rs. all castes except Mehtars showed reluctance to take

Q. 13.—Will the *rayat* the reluctance of the Gonds was never overcome, but unmarried

A.—Yes, the *malguzar* tribal *rayat* partake. All castes came on to kitchens eventually,

Q.—Do you expect *malguzars*. The general reluctance of the lower caste

A.—Yes. large number of kitchens became temporarily overcrowded

Q.—Then the experiment is women could be opened. These kitchens in turn attracted

A.—Yes. to the kitchens previously opened.

management of the local *muladdams* for the admitted to keep the accounts. The cook *advates* were reduced in May to Rs. 2-8-0 and refused regularly by Circle Officers; indeed, by Charge Officers, Tahsildars, the

revenue is under consideration. Rupes Hatta tahsil were suspended.

4

Q. 83.—Individual capacity to pay was not taken into account. First, the demand was reduced in the proportion of falling-off in cultivated area since settlement. The result was again reduced in the proportion of outturn to normal.

Q. 84.—Before collection began, in the case of both kists.

Q. 85.—Rents were remitted in the same proportion as revenue.

The percentage of revenue to be collected was communicated to the malguzar, and he then, with the assistance of the patwari, made a list of the tenants who were to pay the demand allowed. This list was checked by the Revenue Inspectors or Circle Officers, and in case of complaints or disputes, the list was corrected or approved by Tahsildars or myself. The amount to be collected was distributed among the tenants according to their position and the nature of their crops.

Q. 86.—I think the amounts suspended were eminently just. In one village the poor tenants were ordered to pay more than their just share, but they complained to me and I altered the list and punished the Circle Officer. In all other cases I believe the lists were generally fair.

Q. 87.—No.

Q. 88.—No.

Q. 89.—The people in receipt of relief were generally labourers. I have no figures, but I think that very few tenants received relief in comparison with the number of labourers. Tenants for the most part only received relief at works and refused to come on to kitchens.

Q. 90.—People would have been much readier to take village-relief, but this was not offered to them. They were not more ready to come on to works far from their homes.

Q. 91.—There was some contraction of private credit owing to the remission of debt in the conciliation process. I did not notice any reluctance on the part of the people to exhaust their own resources before coming to the Divisional Office. Some of tenants with several head of cattle were desirous of getting work on the local works.

Q. 92.—I consider kitchens a sufficient test at the beginning of a famine.

Q. 93.—I consider selection for admission to all kinds of work on gratuitous relief both practical and necessary. There is no reason why a Circle Officer should not give tickets for admission to a large public work for instance. A rule like this would save lakhs of rupees.

Q. 94.—Kotwars report to the nearest Police station-house or outpost.

Q. 95.—The rate remained normal.

Q. 96.—Cholera occurred in about six villages, but the mortality was not high. When a report was received of cholera, a vaccinator was sent once sent out to the wells. The Assistant Commissioner, the Circle Officer, and the Police Officer, if possible, before the report was received, were sent to the spot. Once cholera had appeared, the people fled to the hills. I consider the rapid disappearance of cholera due to the prompt steps invariably taken to disinfect the wells.

Q. 97.—The works being small, no special sanitary measures were taken. I never found the ground in the neighbourhood of any work was soiled. The people were told not to soil the ground near to the works, and at each work, but generally speaking, there was no objection to the workers did not sleep on the work. They slept in their huts and went to their homes every night. No sanitary measures were taken because no one lived on the spot. The people of the villages came again. The kitchen sheds were swept by a sweeper. The sweeper was given his food free in consideration of the kitchen was responsible that the kitchen was clean. In fact this was always the case.

Q. 99.—The people consumed wild produce. The principal products were ber, bel, makor and health, so far as I know. The Gonds also ate s...

come on to kitchens supported themselves largely on wild products, which they supplemented with food to the value of one or two pice a day which they earned by selling dry firewood which they removed from Government forests under the forest concessions.

Q. 100.—There was very little immigration from Native States. Bands of Marwaris from Jodhpur in Rajputana passed through the district and fed at kitchens; but they passed on to Jubbulpore because there were no large public works here. Before the rains they passed through the district again on their way home. Their numbers, compared with the total number relieved, was insignificant; certainly under 1 per cent.

Q. 101.—The mortality was practically *nil*, as they only stayed a few weeks in the district.

Q. 102.—The orphans were re-absorbed by the village communities. I think it would have been a great mistake to have attempted to collect them and make them over to Missionaries.

Q. 104.—The railway kept pace with the grain traffic, but refused to export fodder. This caused heavy losses to the grass-contractors, who had cut large quantities of grass and compressed it into bales ready for export to Bombay.

Q. 104 (a).—Returns of imports and exports of grain were received from the Railway Company every week. These statistics were quite reliable. No statistics were registered of traffic by road. There is no traffic by river. That by road was insignificant. A large proportion of the rice consumed at kitchens was imported.

Q. 105.—Scarcely any. I think I heard one or two in August, but the numbers on kitchens were reduced in this month because it was expected that a little work could be obtained in the fields.

Q. 106.—The following table:—

Year.	KHARIF.						RABI.										Total.
	Rice.	Juar.	Juar-tur.	Kodon-kutki.	Til.	Miscellaneous food stocks.	Total.	Wheat, pishl.	Wheat.	Wheat-gram.	Gram.	Masur.	Teora.	Linseed.	Lint.	Fine seed grains.	
1897-98	57,118	45,013	45,815	48,596	20,501	558	254,866	11,629	1,383	71,094	62,632	5,271	7,130	5,009	2,843	19,011	189,956
1898-99	62,368	34,887	27,643	42,447	15,472	215	212,395	7,919	3,234	83,890	59,809	2,604	5,409	5,258	3,142	21,318	204,992
1899-1900	62,721	30,173	39,012	46,100	34,475	203	241,777	9,117	1,084	87,022	38,469	3,301	4,277	2,704	8,354	21,395	179,157
1900-1901	50,090	41,530	43,848	53,502	41,905	7,488	247,0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Q.—Will the *rayat* be reluctant to be carried further back; but as it is it shows a

A.—Yes, the *malguzar* tribal raised up tilli and also indicates a tendency to sow pishi and

Q.—Do you expect to be raised in other than separately.

A.—Yes.

Q.—Then the experiment is working

A.—Yes.

sting are paid in grain, and permanent servants, such as the year, are also paid in grain. Temporary labourers are paid in cash and sometimes in grain. If paid in cash it is 6 annas formerly they used to get only 1 anna or 1 anna

Q.—admittance refused

use of to administer the Famine Relief Fund; was for the most part made by Famine a non-official, and he did good work. The for the most part non-official, and are the members of the Charitable Fund Committee distributed at Damoh at his own request was allowed to villages.

non-official agency was successful, but I do not know.

Q. 111.—(a) The system of work was not changed. It could not have affected the numbers on relief, as admission was by ticket.

(b) The task was not changed. The same remark applies here too.

(c) The scale of wages was increased in one case just before the rains. This had no effect on the numbers, as admission was by ticket.

(d) Fines were rare and had no effect on the numbers.

(e) There were no such tests. As admission was by ticket no tests were necessary. There was no disorganization or wandering.

The death-rate remained normal.

Q. 112.—There were no large works in the district; but I had experience of them in Mandla in 1897. It is my conviction that social restraints and moral ties are weakened on such works. For this reason respectable men dislike sending their sons and daughters on to them.

I have the impression that in 1897 it was a common thing for gang muharirs to catch syphilis. When I closed one work in Mandla I found two or three girls, one not more than 12 or 13 years old, in hospital with syphilis. These evils do not arise on small works. I should think it quite possible, for every large work of 5,000 which was opened, to open 5 works of 1,000 each instead. If the ticket system were introduced it is probable that only 2,000 out of the 5,000 would be given tickets. If this were so it would only be necessary to open two small works for one large work. The workers would cover the district with hundreds of useful tanks, and these would be much more useful than a few miles of metalled road. Sanitation would give no trouble. The works would be well managed, and the tasks exacted in full, while speculation and dishonesty of all kinds would be impossible except on a very small scale.

Wherever practicable I would limit the numbers on local works to 1,000.

If this were done I believe that it would result in improved management generally.

D. F. HOH:

Dated the 6th January 1901.

W. N. MAW,

Officialing Deputy Commissioner.

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Answers by L. E. P. GASKIN, Esq., I. C. S., Officiating Deputy Commissioner,  
Mandla, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

Q. 1.—The outlook was ordinary. The rains began well.

The crops had been good in 1897, especially kharif.

The outturn was below the average in 1898-99 as the rainfall had been heavy and continuous, while it stopped abruptly. The outturn of rice and kodo was 90, of wheat 81 and gram 90.

Q. 2.—The cropped area of 1893-94 has been taken as the normal.

The area in 1899 exceeded this, being 416,432 acres against 375,407.

Q. 3.—The rainfall was 27.59 inches against an average of 50.47; 54 per cent.

The rains ceased on the 15th September.

	1899.	Average.
June	6.14	10.71
July	11.32	18.93
August	7.35	12.73
September	2.78	6.70

Q. 4.—57 per cent.

Q. 5.—72 per cent.

Q. 6.—The necessity was assumed from the fact of crop failure. The then Deputy Commissioner reported that relief was necessary in a certain tract in October and village relief was sanctioned on 20th October.

After this test kitchens were opened.

Q. 7.—Emaciation, the result of people to poor kinds of food, such as grass seeds and weeds.

Q. 8.—Village relief was first distributed as noted in the answer to Question No. 6, but it was not extended beyond that tract until the existence of widespread distress was fully proved in April.

In the rest of the district kitchens were opened and distress was gauged by the readiness of people to accept cooked food.

Kitchens were all along the backbone of relief, and were, with the exception of village relief in one small tract, the only form of relief offered until April.

Q. 9.—(a) Lists of relief works were ready. The works had been estimated and cost of each estimated.

(b) The programme consisted of two sets of works, one of those recommended by the agency and the other of simpler works which could be carried out by Civil of

For programme did not furnish the scale the Government necessary. By persons suitable for employment was only

Q. 10.—As explained in answer to questions a new system of instituted. There was a programme of village relief ready.

Q. 11.—There were (a) test-works and (b) poor-houses.

(c) Kitchens were the backbone of relief. Four kitchens were opened in 1899, a few more were added in January and February 1900. In March opened at all Police stations and refused and from that time they applied.

(d) A meeting was held on the 28th of January 1900. The Charitable Relief Fund in Mandla. The response to the appeal practically nothing more was done.

(e) The forests were thrown open to the public in October.





The great advantage of small works is that they do not draw people away from their villages; they do away with the necessity of large camps, with the expense and danger of epidemics which these involve. On the other hand, there is not the same test of the necessity for relief, and small works without any check might attract every one. This objection might, however, be overcome by some system of selection such as was employed here. A strong staff of inspecting officers would be necessary to ensure selection being properly made.

A few works managed by intelligent malguzars were a great success; good work was done. Relieved as they were of all financial responsibility, the malguzars were ready enough to look after the work. I fancy the reluctance of malguzars to undertake the management of village works is sometimes due to their dislike of financial responsibility and to a fear that their accounts may not be correct.

Q. 60.—The district is largely populated by aborigines who are in the majority.

The whole system of relief kitchens and work relief was designed particularly to meet their wants.

No special tests were applied. Relief had to be given near their homes; they would not go any distance for it.

If the mortality statistics are any guide the measures were perfectly successful

Q. 61.—Forest works were opened specially for the aborigines. The workers were paid by the Circle Officer, just as others were paid, and the work was supervised by the Forest Department; a list of those who had been paid was sent by the Circle Officer to the Range Officer or other Forest official appointed by the Forest Divisional Officer to look after the work.

Fodder operations were undertaken by the Forest Department; they served the aborigines.

Q. 62.—Orders were issued to employ the B list workers in certain villages on weeding. But only a very few were thus employed for a week or so in August. I cannot give the exact number so employed. It would not reach 100.

Q. 63.—Weavers in Mandla town were relieved. Cloth was purchased from them out of the Charitable Fund, and the cloth thus purchased was distributed to poor people in the district. These operations were on a very small scale and were confined to the town of Mandla. Weavers elsewhere were treated in the same way as others.

Q. 65.—The measures were successful and economical, the average amount paid being Rs. 20 per month. Two thousand and eighty dhotis were purchased. The Rs. 20 was an advance in return for which the recipient had to furnish dhotis at a specified rate. I do not think that more should have been done in this district.

Q. 66.—None. Fodder was plentiful and water, though scarce in parts, generally obtainable. Cattle died from disease and starvation or thirst.

The mortality was not greatest in tracts in which the scarcity of water was most marked.

Q. 67.—The Forest Department cut a lot of grass for export.

Q. 69.—Kitchen relief was managed by the Church Missionary Society,

It was chosen because the experience of only 5 or 6 left on our hands. The relief was unsatisfactory.

In the hot weather of that year most forest produce and thus escaped the notice of the statistics as available. produce failed them, they rapidly fell off, which made it almost impossible to copy down the statistics.

Again, it had been found that the relief was found in the food with the money given them. the advantage of the prevailing distress was refused the cheap rate in the market.

Q. 70.—No.

Q. 71.—None.

Q. 74.—111 kitchens were opened in the district after the rains broke. A kitchen was expected to be opened after the rains broke. The rabi area was in 1896-97 and was 18 per cent. in 1893-94 to 1894-95. The rabi area was in 1893-94 to 1894-95. The rabi area was in 1893-94 to 1894-95.

The ration was:—

Adults	...	...	...	...	9	chittaks gruel.
Children 10—14	...	...	...	...	7½	„
Do. 7—10	...	...	...	...	6	„
Do. 3—7	...	...	...	...	4½	„
Under 3	...	...	...	...	3	„

The order was that the food was to be consumed on the premises. It was frequently broken.

Q. 75-a.—The Circle Officers drew up the lists. The lists were checked and the recipients inspected by Charge Officers, Assistants, and, when possible, by myself. The lists were checked by some responsible officer on an average about once a month.

(a) Payments were in cash.

(b) Monthly, except at the end, when 15 days' dole is given, as the full month's dole was not thought necessary.

(c) At the homes of the recipients.

—Brahmins were employed as far as possible in Hindu populated tracts ; Gonds, Ahirs and Khatwars were employed elsewhere.

Highly or respectable castes did not go to kitchens at all. They sent their children.

79.—Some kitchens were in charge of the Police, some were managed by school-masters, others by the mukaddam of the village, no was given a clerk to keep up the registers. Few of the mukaddams can read and write.

a report from the staff, Circle Officers, Charge Officers and assistants, all inspected kitchens  
wells. Checked the accounts. I myself saw as many as 100 could. Surprise visits were paid  
possibly for possible the report was received the  
the spot. Once cholera

Q. 82.—Revenue and other considerations

a demand of Rs. 1,04,871 of malguzari  
yotwari revenue. Remissions are now

Q. 83.—The  
compared with

the crop outturn and the area under crop

A mass of information decided by the Government, and the suspension in each case local Government's approval.

In the case of r... of s...  
under each was... it ar...  
ains exce... is charged on til and rabi crops. The  
ount he had to pay calculated.

84.—Rough  
ary were drawn  
hole and suspe

Q. 85.—Suspensions of rent followed automatically on suspensions of revenue.

The total amount of rent which a malguzar could collect was intimated to him. He was allowed to collect from whom he liked, but had to file a list showing the cultivators and the amount he proposed to collect from each.

Q. 86.—There have been a few cases in which malguzars have collected more than they should have. Action has been taken against them.

Q. 88.—I think relief was sufficient and not excessive.

Q. 89.—The large proportion of people on relief consisted of labourers and petty cultivators. State ryots and occupancy tenants were to be met with but not in large numbers.

Q. 90.—The people were much more ready to come on relief. They had learnt to look to Government when the pinch came. They had confidence in the intentions of Government.

Q. 91.—There was, I think, reluctance to exhaust their own resources before coming on to relief.

There seemed to me to be much less shame about accepting State relief than there was in 1897.

The people clamoured for relief before it was really necessary. There were attempts to force the officials' hands and to get relief works started before they were really necessary.

The people invariably made things out to be much worse than they were.

Q. 94.—Kotwars report to the police who make entries in their own registers and in the kotwar's book; the majority of mukaddams and kotwars are illiterate and cannot make the entries themselves.

The kotwars' report weekly.

The police sent in their returns which are compiled for the district in the Civil Surgeon's office.

Q. 99.—The people made a large use of wild products. Chief among them was the seed of the bamboo. In parts of the district the bamboo seeded profusely, and the forests were full of people collecting it. They carried it away in sacks on pack-bullocks.

It appeared to be a nourishing food and to have no ill effects on the health of the people.

The aboriginal tribes of this district always make a free use of wild products; their health did not suffer.

Q. 100.—There were a few immigrants from Rewah, but the State started measures and the immigrants went back. They were never in large numbers.

Q. 102.—Two were handed over to the Church Missionary Society, and the rest to their relatives or caste people. There were only 5 or 6 left on our hands.

Q. 104 (a).—None.

There were large importations, but no statistics are available.

Q. 105.—Yes, but a careful inquiry showed them to be without relief. Unemployed labourers who were not admitted to relief were found in the fact was that employers wished to take advantage of the prevailing distress at cheaper rates, while the labourers refused the cheap rate in the hope of getting to relief.

Q. 106.—There has been a great change. The rabi area was in 1893-94 16 per cent. of the total; it fell to 16 per cent. in 1896-97 and was 18 per cent. in 1897-98. The district is small, and the wheat area has fallen from 1,20,000 acres in 1893-94 to 1,00,000 acres. The double-cropped area fluctuates from year to year with the change in the price of fodder or used for

362  
6/1/11

The marked features are the decline of the rabi area and the substitution of gram and wheat-gram for wheat.

Q. 107.—Yes. No. No.

Q. 108.—The whole system of work relief was a departure.

The system has been explained above. I think it was successful, as the mortality never reached the decennial mean.

MANDLA:

The 5th January 1901. }

L. E. P. GASKIN,

Offg. Deputy Commissioner.

a report fax, wells. asked the possibility possible was burch

Q. 82.—Re revenue and er considerati

Q. 83.—The compared with

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In the case of r under each was

Q. 84.—Rough ary were drawn hole and suscep

Secretariat Press, Nagpur:

R., 8-1-1901—100.

Answers by A. L. SAUNDERS, Esq., I. C. S., Deputy Commissioner, Nagpur District,  
to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

Q. 1.—When the rains of 1899 commenced this district was generally prosperous. It had been but little affected by the famine of 1896-97 and its previous revenue history was good.

In 1897-98 both crops were excellent. In 1898-99 the kharif was excellent in one tahsil, fairly good in two others, and poor in the fourth (Umrer); the rabi was poor throughout. As compared with a normal crop on a normal area (100) these two seasons are taken as 115 and 85, respectively.

Q. 2.—The kharif sowings were above the normal (760,000 acres against 665,000). The normal cultivated area is taken to be that for 1893-94 which is regarded as the standard year.

Q. 3.—(a) 38·66"

(b) 13·21"=34 per cent.

(c) Middle of September practically.

		1899.	Average.
(d) June	...	4·94	8·93
July	...	3·54	13·81
August	...	2·69	8·35
September	...	2·04	7·57
Total	...	13·21	38·66

Q. 4.—As compared with 1893-94 (normal) 52 per cent.

Q. 5.—(a) About 15 per cent.

(b) „ 25 per cent.

[The first figure is the more conjectural. I have statistics as to number of labourers, but not as to cultivators distinguished as petty. I have taken the D Class of the Settlement Report, paragraph 150.]

Q. 6.—When relief was first started in this district the Chief Commissioner (Mr. Ibbetson) observed that the necessity for relief had been assumed from the fact of crop failure which was not sufficient evidence.

Q. 7.—I was not here when relief was first started. My predecessor (Mr. H. F. Mayes) knew the district well. I find mentioned, as facts on which relief was considered necessary, some increase in crime and some observed degradation among children. There were also no doubt other facts.

Q. 8.—Public works, kitchens (for children) and village relief were all undertaken from commencement. In the case of the two latter there were no tests other than the opinion of the officers admitting to relief according to the principles laid down by the administration.

Q. 9.—(a) Yes. (b) No.

Q. 10.—Large public works. We had not a programme of village relief from the beginning. They were prepared later.

Q. 11.—We had no poor-houses. The other measures of relief were placed in special forests was actually first in point of time (August 1899); but in practice relief were very regular sequence. When a tract was once declared distressed such formalities were getting practicable and desirable were started simultaneously (vide Chief Commissioner's report among infants, *passim*.)

Q. 12.—The Provincial system was followed. I need not, I think, have just described the Provincial system. I have just described the Provincial system.

Q. 13.—Here also I would refer to the Provincial orders. As the district is small, and sanctioned for this purpose, about half of which was advanced. One be closed early on loan of Rs. 2,000; the rest was taken by the taluqars and cultivators. The first of the above mentioned through the District Council. These are recoverable in part.

Q. 14.—Yes, in some parts. "New wells are sunk every year for garden cultivation wherever water is tolerably near the surface." (Settlement Report, paragraph 100). I am afraid I cannot give the average depth of water below the surface: it varies very much. As for loans for wells, please see answer to last question. This measure was taken primarily to secure water, and was hardly any use as an agricultural resource. These wells are often a valuable improvement; they are not much use as a means of affording employment as the work requires skilled labourers.

Q. 15.—Road and tank works; the former under Public Works Department; the latter under the district authorities; these were in a few cases supervised by local malguzars, but this plan did not give good results, and later we employed special salaried men under the regular famine staff. The District and Local Boards were stopped from spending money on ordinary works so that their funds might be available for famine purposes.

Q. 16, 17 and 18.—We had no test works properly so-called. The works started were run from the first as relief works. As to the other questions I would refer to the Provincial orders.

Q. 19.—See answer to Question 15.

Q. 20.—As far as the Public Works Department was concerned everything was ready and there was no delay. For the village works there was some delay both as regards establishment and tools and plant.

Q. 21.—5,000 was the regulation number. This was exceeded in the two works in the Umrer Tahsil—Bhiwapur and Thana. The pressure was relieved by drafting to the works near Nagpur.

Q. 22.—These matters were regulated by the Provincial orders to which I would refer.

Q. 23.—Free. There was no distance test. Residence was not compulsory.

Q. 24.—It is very hard to say, as of course it depends very much on the intensity of the distress. In the Umrer Tahsil (population nearly 150,000) where distress was general two charges appeared sufficient. It is true that as already stated, these were for a time overcrowded; but on the other hand they were largely resorted to by people from Chanda and Bhandara.

As to distance the people who depend solely on a relief work for subsistence seem absolutely indifferent as to how far they go. The Gonds are an exception; they deserted the work on the Great Northern Road when it was moved away from the jungles. But the people only use the relief work as a subsidiary means of subsistence (as e. g., where the women and children go on the work while the men are engaged elsewhere) who were very numerous here, perhaps the majority, are naturally deterred by distance. Speaking generally I should put 10 miles as about the limit for the latter class.

Q. 25, 26, 27, 29, 30 and 31.—These questions relate to the Provincial system, so it seems unnecessary to give detailed answers. As regards my opinion about classification of villages I was consulted about and respectfully agree altogether with the conclusions reached in the Chief Commissioner's Circular No. F-41, dated the 22nd January 1900.

a report of facts. wells. I am not sure that the condition of things in the Umrer Tahsil can be held responsible for the acute distress, but I think the district payment by results gave the people and it has some advantages over the tax system. As I have said above, workers their relief wage was only a subsidiary means of subsistence, making light work and low wage were preferred to hard work and good pay. to enforce task work under these circumstances.

Q. 82.—Revenue and other considerations. I have not at hand information as to what the tasks were on each work. If workers did different tasks there were weakly gangs. No allowance was made for the change of workers' homes. I have not details of the different changes. I have generally, I think, in the direction of leniency.

Q. 83.—The scale of wages was adequate. It was of course liberal in the cases I have mentioned where relief-work was done. It also operated liberally in the case of emergency work. I do not like to say unduly liberal because with payment there was some evidence that they saved near a work and liquor-sellers near made a profit from returning workers. Copper

A mass of information decided by me. In the case of relief work under each was a margin. Q. 84.—Roughly one or two cases of hole and suspicious

ent necessary. But a  
suggestions a new system  
key ready.  
4(b) poor-house  
Four Vice  
Relief  
heard

Q. 35.—Rest-day wage, except where we brought pressure to close a work. I have no experience of the other plan.

Q. 36 and 37.—These questions do not seem to apply to our system.

Q. 38 and 39.—Daily. I doubt if less frequent payment would not have done. We paid village relief doles monthly. I do not see why they should get into debt on this plan.

Q. 40.—The head of the gang on Public Works. I prefer this; it saves trouble and seems to suit the people.

Q. 41.—I have no statistics.

Q. 42.—See Circulars Nos. F.-20 and F.-38.

Q. 43.— Ditto. I think on the whole a minimum wage for weakly persons is better, but I have not seen the other plan.

Q. 44.—No.

Q. 45.—See Circular No. F.-20.

Q. 46.—Deputy Commissioner. Juari. Yes.

Q. 47.—I would refer to the Provincial orders. There were no special district features.

Q. 48.—See Chapter VI of the Code (Circular No. F.-18). I do not remember being ever overruled.

Q. 51.—We drafted some people from a Public Works Department road work to a tank work in Umrer town when the former was overcrowded and the deepening of the tank was necessary for supply of water. This was only temporary. As a general rule no such transfer was made because we had more public works than we could fill.

Q. 52, 53, 54, 55, 56 and 57.—I would refer to the Provincial order particularly Circular No. F.-38. Tank works were practically the only kind tried in this district. They were only important in the jungle country in the north-east of the district. Here they were worked by special-salaried officials (*amanis*) because in this area it is difficult to find non-official supervision of any capacity. Two large tank works in the plains country were placed under *malguzars*, but their supervision did not give good results.

There was practically no selection of applicants for relief.

Q. 58.—There was not sufficient contiguity anywhere for me to say.

Q. 59.—I am not in favour of such works as a means of relief. Other forms are practicable. They are very difficult to control and they interfere with private enterprise; *malguzars* will not make tanks for themselves if there is a chance of Government making them for them.

Q. 60.—Last census gave the number as 47,584. The *amanis* inhabit the jungle country in the north-east angle of the district (called the Deolapar tract). This was the most distressed part of the district. Relief was given at the beginning of the famine by (a) a Public Works Department road work near Deolapar, (b) village relief, (c) kitchens, (d) opening the forests, (e) forest works. When owing to want of water the first-formed was moved down to near Kamphee, these people deserted it. Nor would they go to the mines near Mansar (just on the edge of the jungle tract) in any numbers. We had to start village works (tanks) near their homes. A Staff Corps Officer, Captain Stanton, was placed in special charge of this area with head-quarters at Deolapar. Kitchens and village relief were very widely extended. At one time during the famine 75 per cent. of the population were getting kitchen relief. The mortality, however, was rather high here, particularly among infants, though we had special feeding arrangements for the latter.

Q. 61.—Two small forest roads were undertaken in the country. I have just described which contains most of the reserved forests of the district. Grass-cutting was also started here and in the jungle country south of the Umrer Tahsil. These were all under the Forest Department. Comparatively speaking the forest area of this district is small, and these operations did not affect a large part of the population and had to be closed early on completion, but they were useful while they lasted. They chiefly benefited the aboriginal tribes. Nearly all the grass cut was distributed to needy tenants for fodder or used for thatching kitchen sheds.

Q. 62.—Please see the orders about "B" lists in Circular No. F-49. This system was started in Umrer Tahsil and the Deolapar tract in July, and later extended all over the district. This lasted till the middle of October. The maximum number was 6,697. The work done was under village headmen.

Q. 63.—Yes, weavers were relieved at their own trade in Nagpur, Kamptee, Umrer, and five smaller towns. The maximum number relieved was over 21,000.

Q. 64.—Yes, especially after weaver relief had once begun. I don't know about being altogether unfit, but the physique of weavers is poor as a rule.

Q. 65.—These measures were a success from both points of view named. This system is a cheap form of relief. But there are other objections.

There is no real test of distress and no limitation to a bare subsistence. I also think that the rules are framed too much on commercial lines, and that the employment of middlemen is unwise and unnecessary. Under orders of the Administration this relief was confined to large weaver communities whose members might fairly be considered unfitted for relief-works.

Q. 66 and 67.—I have already referred to the supply of grass in jungle tracts. But there was not really any scarcity of fodder. Though juari was more or less a failure, it had plenty of stalk, and juari straw (karbi) is the usual cattle-fodder here. It was even exported. The cattle suffered much from want of water. Efforts were made to assist them by digging wells and pits (jhirias) in river beds and tanks, and by damming streams which had water, these measures being undertaken in part directly but mainly through malguzars and others. I have already mentioned the special water-supply loans.

Q. 68.—By cooked food as a rule. Please see Circulars Nos. F-20 and F-38.

Q. 69.—Kitchens, under orders of the Local Administration.

Q. 70.—I have not the report referred to, but the system followed was that prescribed by the Local Administration (Circular No. F-3). Recipients were selected by persons with local knowledge according to the principles laid down. There were no tests as I understand the question.

Q. 71, 72 and 73.—We had no poor-houses.

Q. 74.—I give the following figures not being sure what date to take for the breaking of the rain:

12th May	...	...	...	...	31
26th "	...	...	...	...	44
16th June	...	...	...	...	74
30th "	...	...	...	...	89
14th July	...	...	...	...	119
28th "	...	...	...	...	175
4th August	...	...	...	...	196
18th "	...	...	...	...	213

The radius was the prescribed radius.

Q. 75.—Five ~~cent~~ <sup>cent</sup> for an adult, 7 to 3 for children. Meals were for a time distributed twice a day, but I ordered once at noon. They fed on the premises, but were allowed to take away leftovers. In Nagpur for want of a commodation, we let them take away the food.

Q. 76.—I don't remember any rule, but Civil kitchens were not allowed near relief-works.

Q. 77.—Freed.

Q. 74.—See 1, 2, 3.

Q. 75.—Please see rules appended to Circular F-3.

Q. 76.—Grain monthly, at their homes.

Q. 77.—We allowed village relief to kotwari (village watchmen) in the more distressed area or to their families, because they could not collect their dues from the tenants. I think that was the only case. It lasted through the famine.



Q. 78.—Kunbis mostly. It was very hard to get Brahmans.

At the beginning of the famine almost all classes objected, even some of the low-caste people. By the time the rains had fairly set in this reluctance had very generally disappeared.

Q. 79.—There were three classes—(1) respectable non-official residents, (b) local officials, such as policemen, schoolmasters or patwaris, (c) special salaried managers. Supervision and check were carried on by the famine staff, there being in this district a special statement of kitchen inspections.

Q. 80.—Cheap grain shops were started in Nagpur and Kamptee in November. The former was closed in February when prices had fallen somewhat, and the latter in May. They were intended chiefly for suffering people of the better class, particularly women. Selections for admission were made by Committee members. In Nagpur it cost Rs. 4,800. I have not the Kamptee figures. In the former case the local distress turned out much less than was at first anticipated and the institution was hardly needed. The Kamptee one was useful.

Q. 81.—These two institutions were not on a sufficient scale to affect the importation of grain or the level of prices.

Q. 82.—The total suspended was a little over six lakhs out of Rs. 9,86,000 demand. Orders have not yet been passed about remissions.

Q. 83.—Primarily upon crop failure, but the general capacity of the individual to pay was also taken into account. The latter was determined by the Deputy Commissioner with the assistance of the Tahsildar.

Q. 84.—Collection had begun but had not progressed very far.

Q. 85.—Yes.\* The malguzar (landlord).

Q. 86.—No.

Q. 87.—It never did. The highest percentage reached was 14·23.

Q. 88.—The provision of relief works under Public Works Department was more than was needed. In the central plains country round Nagpur, outside Umrer Tahsil, there were at one time or another seven relief works open and none of these filled naturally. Labour was drafted from Umrer Tahsil and Bhandara District to fill the tank-works at Nagpur itself. We tried issuing tickets on Mr. Fuller's system, but there was no demand.

Kitchen relief was, I think, at one time rather more liberal than was necessary. Employers complained of not being able to get labour.

Relief was, I think, defective during the cold weather in the Chapar tract owing to the removal of the relief work and delay in opening village works caused by absence of tools and difficulty in organising establishment. I judge from my own observation when I visited the tract in February.

Q. 89.—Labourers and petty cultivators mostly; also some artisans. I have no precise information, but I do not think there were many proprietors with security of tenure.

Q. 90.—I have not had any experience of former famines.

Q. 91.—I think there was a contraction of credit generally. It was a common statement that the *sowcar* would lend no money. As regards the latter part of the question, in the early part of the famine applicants for relief appeared as a rule to have exhausted their own resources, but I doubt if this was the case when the rush on the kitchens set in.

Q. 92 and 93.—The Code may be said to have been superseded by the series of famine Circulars. I have no criticisms to offer on the Code, but I think in this district at any rate applicants for kitchen relief might have been restricted, selection being made by the local famine officials, as was done for part of the time.

Q. 94.—The police register, reports being made by village watchmen in rural areas and heads of household in urban.

\* I understand the word "Zamindari" in this question is used in the North-West Provinces, not the Central Provinces, sense.

Q. 95.—Allowing for epidemics the mortality was not very high. I think some mortality among infants may have been due to the food being unsuitable. It was difficult to arrange generally for special feeding for infants.

Q. 96.—I cannot say with any exactness. Cholera prevailed from April to September, causing 3,920 deaths. As to measures taken to improve water-supply please see answers to questions 14 and 66. Yes, we used to disinfect, but I cannot give the intervals exactly.

Q. 97 (a).—I would refer to the Provincial orders. There was a Hospital Assistant on each Public Works Department work who was responsible for sanitation. Inspection was made by an Assistant Surgeon besides other inspecting officers. These arrangements were sufficient. There were no special sanitary arrangements in kitchens other than peripatetic medical inspection.

Q. 98.—Yes. I do not remember any cases of bad grain being discovered.

Q. 99.—Very little in this district.

Q. 100 and 101.—No. We have no Native States near.

Q. 102.—I have none to dispose of. The few cases that have occurred have as a rule been made over to Missionaries, but several private adoptions have been reported.

Q. 103.—No, to both questions.

Q. 104.—No.

Q. 104 (a).—We got statistics from the railways (practically the only channel) of imports of food-grain. I have no reason to think them unreliable. I cannot say what proportion these imports bore to the assumed consumption; a great deal was re-exported.

Q. 105.—No, but there were some complaints against the kitchens.

Q. 106.—There has been no increase of double-cropping. There seems to be no tendency to substitute food-crops for more valuable crops. The *knarif* area has increased since 1893-94, but that is largely due to the expansion of the demand for cotton. The opening of the mills and railways tends to increase the area under marketable crops (*vide* Settlement Report, paragraph 90).

Q. 107.—Labourers hired by the day are generally paid in cash, otherwise in grain. There is a tendency to substitute a cash wage when the price of grain is high. Cash wages do not rise proportionately to the rise in prices, sometimes they are even reduced. This was often the case where some members of a family were getting Government relief.

Q. 108.—Please see answer to questions 92 and 93. The orders of the Administration have not been departed from.

Q. 109.—There were two Staff Corps Officers, Captain Stanton, 3rd Bengal Infantry, and Lieutenant F. C. Keily, Bombay Infantry. We had no officers of the Native Army and no British Non-Commissioned Officers, but there was one native Non-Commissioned Officer working as a Circle Officer. I cannot suggest any source other than those that were tried.

Q. 110.—There were two village works placed under malguzars. This was not very successful, the work was too laborious and they handed it over to their servants. Many kitchens are under non-officials who sometimes work well, but are inferior in efficiency to officials. The distribution of village relief was generally carried out through village headmen. This was generally satisfactory. The Nagpur Municipal Committee, particularly their President and Vice-President, did excellent service in supervising a Municipal relief-work and a kitchen, and distributing charitable relief. I think, however, that non-official agency should be employed with great caution in a famine. The standard arguments for this agency hardly apply, and the results of inefficiency are too serious to run risks.

Q. 111.—Changes in (a) do not occur, but in (b), (c) and (d) to too small an extent to be appreciable. My experience is that where people are once on a relief-work, they are not easily driven away by changes of rainfall. To (e) drafting is the only one of those mentioned that occurred here. Sometimes this led to desertions, but not often within the limits of the district. I cannot say that such effects as those mentioned were noticeable.

Q. 112.—I only heard of one scandal.

NAGPUR

4th January 1901.

A. J. SAUNDERS,

Deputy Commissioner.

Replies by F. W. M. SCOTT, Esq., Executive Engineer, Nagpur Division, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

Q. 20.—Under that of the Public Works Department. Yes. There was no delay in opening works, some being opened at a fortnight's notice. Tools and plant were available, although in one or two cases some difficulty was experienced from a heavy rush on the work.

Q. 21.—Yes. From 6,000 to 7,000 workers. Yes, frequently. Overflow charges had to be opened. Thus the Amarwara Charge in the Chhindwara District rose to over 11,000 in the first fortnight of December 1899, and fresh charges had to be opened at Harai and Khapa.

Q. 22.—Yes. Please see Central Provinces General Order No. 287-7630, where all these points are laid down in detail. Hutting was provided for workers from a distance, *e. g.*, Nagpur tank-works.

Q. 23.—Yes. Selection by ticket was not employed in the Narsinghpur, Chhindwara, Nagpur, Wardha and Chanda districts. A distance-test was only brought into play when the monsoon camps were opened. Residence on the work was not compulsory.

Q. 24.—Each charge may be taken to serve the population within a radius of 8 to 10 miles. The largest proportion of workers on most of the charges came from within this area. In some special instances workers came from as far as 30 miles and more. This was most noticeable in the tank-work at Nagpur, where a large number of workers came from Umrer to the south and Bhandara on the east.

Q. 25 and 26.—Please see Chapter VI, Central Provinces Famine Code and General Order No. 287-7630.

Q. 27.—Yes, but such action had to be approved by the Sub-Divisional Officer and Executive Engineer.

Q. 28.—The instructions given in Appendices VI, VII and VIII of General Order No. 287-7630, were carefully followed and found to work well on the whole. Gangs were, however, kept to within 40 for excavation, and up to 50 for carriers in the case of long leads. It was found that a greater number on the intermediate system was more than one mate could manage properly, and made the distribution of the daily payments difficult. For material-breaking gangs were from 30 to 40. The fewer the number of mates the better, provided proper supervision is maintained.

Q. 29.—The classification and wage-scale laid down in Central Provinces General Order No. 287-7630, is practically that of page 445 of the Famine Commission's Report of 1893. It was found to work very well throughout.

Q. 30.—Yes. A distinction is natural and necessary, not only between the sexes but also to a certain extent amongst the male workers. This is particularly the case in excavation of tanks. Care had to be taken that the strong and muscular men were only employed on digging, and those of inferior physique on carrying. Want of care in classification really produced discontent amongst the workers.

Q. 31.—The intermediate system as explained in the General Order was introduced from the beginning in all the five districts of which I had experience. In Chhindwara at the commencement there were a good many workers employed on the intermediate system, but this was largely due to improper classification, and a partiality on the part of the Officer-in-charge at Amarwara for this system, by which individual payments were made, and not to gangs through the mate. It was soon found possible to reduce the task to very insignificant proportions, much to the satisfaction of the workers themselves.

The two systems were carried on simultaneously both (a) in the same work, and (b) in the same work.

Q. 32.—No, I consider that the system of payment by results worked well throughout the operations, and the good condition of the relief workers and papers from camps showed that relief was adequately afforded.

Q. 33.—The tasks laid down in the General Order No. 287-7630 as to the work to be done for earthwork. In ordinary black cotton soil 100 cubic feet pit may be dug, and that the work is done from the commencement at the Baba Camp in the Narsinghpur District.

In the tank-work near Nagpur 100 cubic feet measurement in the tank was done, and 48 cubic feet to 80 cubic feet in moorum, was readily done.

Q. 34.—The wages were adequate, with a tendency to undue liberality. The workers who remained on the works were always in good condition. Yes, there was evidence of saving. Copper coin returned freely to the Banias.

Q. 34.—The wages were adequate, with a tendency to rise. Yes, there was no difficulty at first owing to Officer-in-charge receiving copper from Banias who remained on the works were always in good condition. Money in several instances was found on relief workers complaining that they were not properly fed. In one case a worker complained that some of his companions had absconded with money he had lent them. Camp bazars were stocked with sweetmeats, fruit, condiments, such as mango pickle, saris and cloth, which were freely bought by the workers.

—difficulty at first owing to Officer-in-charge receiving copper from Banias who remained on the works were always in good condition. Money in several instances was found on relief workers complaining that they were not properly fed. In one case a worker complained that some of his companions had absconded with money he had lent them. Camp bazars were stocked with sweetmeats, fruit, condiments, such as mango pickle, saris and cloth, which were freely bought by the workers.

There was difficulty at first owing to the copper coin to silver. This showed that Banias were at a premium of 1 pice in the rupee. The Nagpur Division at

Q. 35.—A rest-day wage was given as a rule, it was discontinued in Chanda, but re-introduced later, and ceased throughout the commencement of the rains. Is it preferable, with the existing scale of wages, that no rest-day wage should be given, or that a fine should be levied for not working on a rest-day, except under exceptional circumstances?—*Works Superintendent.*

It would be preferable, with the existing scale of wages, to be given.

Q. 36.—The minimum wage is not too high; a limit of 50 per cent. for fining, except under the direct orders of the Officer-in-charge, subsequently approved by the Famine Works Superintendent in the case of contamination, worked very well.

Q. 36.—The minimum wage is not too high. The direct orders of the Officer-in-charge, subsequently approved by the Superintendent in the case of contaminaciousness worked very well.

Q. 37.—Yes. At first payment-by-results was strictly adhered to, this was, however, subsequently modified as shown in the preceding paragraph. No, the penal wage did not become the wage generally earned. There may have been a few isolated instances in occasional gangs but no general reduction of wages. In one instance, at the Chaurai Camp in the Chhindwara District, a good many gangs were fined for some days continuously, from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  in January 1900. The gangs thus fined had a very large proportion of women, and the reduction of the task from 3 cubic feet to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cubic feet for Class II workers resulted in a cessation of the fining.

Q. 38.—Yes, it has given the best results.

33.—Daily, with the best results.

Q. 39 Daily.

Q. 38.—Daily, with the best results.

Q. 39.—Daily.

Q. 40.—To the rate of the gangs, except in the case of task-work gangs. Individual payments are not advisable.

Q. 41.—In some instances of this.

Q. 42.—(b) of the Famine Commission. Diggers. Task-work gangs.

Q 41. - I can give no instances of this.

Q 41 - I can give no instances of the fact that the system approximated to that at page 209 (b) or the date, and not to the diggers.

A The system was made according to the classification of the gang, as in the case of excavation, gangs were organized as to provide the proper number of carriers to diggers.

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NAGPUR

4th Januar

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Q. 45.—Please see Appendix XI of General Order No. 287-7630.

Q. 46.—By the Deputy Commissioner of each district.

The cheapest staple grain of the district. Small variations in price were neglected, below half a seer.

Q. 47.—The system laid down in General Order No. 287-7630, was strictly followed.

Q. 48.—Please see Chapter VI, page 49 of General Order No. 287-7630.

Q. 49.—No.

Q. 68 (a).—Fed in the kitchen with cooked food. Very rarely cash doles were given where there was caste objection to cooked food.

Q. 75.—The adult ration was 12 chittaks.

Children over 8 years 8 „

„ under 8 „ 4 „

distributed twice a day at fixed hours, and consumed on the premises, what could not be eaten at one sitting being allowed to be taken away.

Q. 78.—Brahmins where possible, but chiefly Kunbis. Gonds, where this tribe were numerous. At first there was considerable reluctance to take advantage of the kitchens where Kunbi cooks were employed, but this soon wore off and the kitchens were freely resorted to.

Q. 96.—The chief cause of increased mortality due to impure water was the outbreak of cholera. It was found practically impossible to prevent relief workers resorting to stagnant pools and backwaters on the banks of rivers which could not be entirely guarded. Wells were sunk in the beds of dry water-courses, and these were disinfected with permanganate of potash twice a week when there was no epidemic, and every other day during an epidemic. Water cylinders were lavishly provided, and in some instances water was carried as far as 6 to 8 miles to supply relief workers.

Q. 97.—Flags were placed 400 yards from camps and the line of work, and conservancy guards were employed to see that these limits were observed by the relief workers.

Q. 98.—Yes. Occasionally inferior grain was found exposed for sale and the vendor was promptly removed and his stock destroyed.

Q. 99.—When the monsoon was well advanced the relief workers, especially in the Wardha District, resorted very largely to various descriptions of "Baji" or wild spinney and other green stuff. This did not affect their health particularly, but it was considered by the Famine Works Superintendent of the Wardha District that it had been a cause of the epidemic cholera which clung to that district in July and August.

NAGPUR:

The 5th January 1901.

F. W. M. SCOTT

Executive Engineer,

Neighbourhood Division.

His grace

has been  
aid by Police

all papers from

services to the  
city, and that the



Answers by Mr. S. G. SUBHEDAR, Extra-Assistant Commissioner, Nagpur,  
to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

Q. 63.—Special measures were taken to relieve the weavers at the following places :—

1. Nagpur.
2. Umrer.
3. Kampti.
4. Kalmeshwar, including Dhapewara and Bamhni.
5. Khapa, including Vakodee Patansaongi.

The Koshtis (Hindu weavers), the Momins (Muhammadan weavers) and the Mahars form the principal classes of weavers. Mahars manufacture coarse cloth and were not therefore admitted to this relief. It was found in 1897, that they attended the ordinary relief-works. The Koshtis generally weave fine cloth. Those at Nagpur and Umrer are weavers of fine cloth.

The system adopted was the same as in 1897. Circular letter No. F-27, dated the 11th October 1899, laid down the rules for the organisation and distribution of relief which were followed during the year. At each of the aforesaid centres, a Committee of management was appointed and a Government officer was placed in charge, in order to see *inter alia* that only those who satisfied the conditions laid down in paragraph 3 of the Circular referred to above, were admitted to relief.

The relief was started at the early stage of the famine. At Nagpur, where the total population of weavers is nearly 22,000 (Koshtis and Momins), nearly 10,000 were on relief. These were admitted after the closest scrutiny by the Officer-in-charge, assisted by merchants and leading members of the community.

The valuation of the cloth manufactured by the weavers was made by a paid appraiser, assisted by one or two members of the Committee. The value was so adjusted as to leave a sufficient margin for the maintenance of the weavers. The wages allowed to a workman at the customary rate of one-fourth of the outlay cover the remuneration of the members of the family working with him. The value of cloth was credited in adjustment of the advances made to the weavers from time to time.

The following table will show the total cost to Government at each of the following centres :—

			Rs.	a.	p.
Nagpur	...	...	1,84,254	6	...
Umrer	...	...	2,3064	0	...
Kamptee	...	...	1,93,77	15	9
Kalmeshwar	...	...	1,03,810	8	7
Khapa	...	...	78,863	4	0
Total	...	...	6,77,469	3	8

The stock of cloth will be sold when the demand revives as directed in F-27, dated the 11th October 1899. We have already received offers, but it is expedient to sell it.

The one great defect of the system is that it leaves room for dishonest middlemen to privately enforce payment of a fixed sum of money by the sums advanced to them for the manufacture of cloth. This was done by Police personal supervision and inquiry into the complaints personally on the spot of the middleman or by forcing the middleman to pay back the amount to the workman. Instances were seen in which the really destitute were depressed and those who agreed to pay them more were employed in their stead.

The system of task work is more elaborate and costly and a large force is necessary to work it.

Q. 64.—They showed reluctance to go on ordinary relief-works, they are habitually used to work in the shade and are therefore unable to work. A weaver is physically unfit for being a digger. He may be utilized as a labourer but he is not admitted to the weakly gangs. It would be more expedient to employ him in his own trade rather than employ him in a relief-camp where he does not work, and does not therefore earn a sufficient wage.

Q. 65.—The relief to the weavers under the system laid down in F-27, dated the 11th October 1899, was successful, as it afforded relief to nearly 21,000 people in the district. The people were maintained by employing them on work most congenial to them. There was no interference with private trade, as the distressed people formed only a portion of the total population and it allowed sufficient room for private enterprise. On the ground of economy this form of relief was also successful. No doubt large advances have to be made in the beginning; but the value of the cloth stocked nearly counterbalances the sum expended on it. If the cloth were sold wholesale, there is fear that the local merchants will form a ring and offer to buy it at a discount of 2 to 4 annas per rupee. The loss thus sustained and the cost of establishment will not exceed the expenditure incurred on ordinary relief-works. If the cloth were sold retail through a commission agent, who will get 6 per cent for the whole stock of the cloth, the loss would be considerably less, and I should think it may be possible to realize the amount of advances and the cost of establishment.

If coarse weavers were admitted to relief, more could certainly have been done. Relief would have had to be extended to all villages where the weavers of the Mehra caste were found in numbers.

S. G. SUBHEDAR,

*Extra-Assistant Commissioner,*

NAGPUR:

*The 4th January 1901.*



Q. 1.—In 1899 the outlook at the commencement of the rains was good. Good rains fell in the first week of June. Sowings were made and the seeds germinated successfully in the nurseries.

1897 was, I believe, a year of scarcity.

1898 was, I understand, a normal year.

Q. 2.—Kharif sowings were up to normal I understand: I cannot say how the area is calculated.

Q. 3.—(a) The average rainfall in Chanda district is about 50 inches increasing towards the east of the district to about 60 inches.

(b) The actual rainfall in 1899 was from 20 to 25 inches, giving a percentage of 40 to 45 per cent. of the normal.

(c) Rains ceased except in occasional showers about the middle of September.

(d) Rain fell on the 6th of June and continued for about a week, during which rice was sown and the nurseries looked very favourable. A break, lasting till the second week of August, then ensued, during which practically no rain fell. At that time we had about 6 to 8 inches. This was succeeded by another break which lasted till early in September when we had from 4 to 5 inches. This was succeeded by heavy showers until the end of October. I cannot say how the distribution compares with other years, but the effect of the long drought between June and August was to so dry the ground that any subsequent falls we had seemed to be absorbed at once and their effect was merely to temporarily revive the drooping plants.

Q. 4.—In juari tracts with which I am acquainted the crop was from 6 to 8 annas. In rice tracts the harvest ranged from 3 annas to practically nothing.

Q. 5.—I think some 60 per cent. of the population are wholly dependent on agriculture, of whom 35 per cent. would be owners and tenants of lands and 25 per cent. farm labourers. Thirty per cent. more would be non-agricultural labourers and artisans, so that only some 10 per cent. of the population is entirely independent of agriculture.

Q. 6.—Test works were opened by Mr. Napier, but every one knew that famine was unavoidable.

Q. 7.—As early as middle of September there was—

- (1) An absence of grain in markets.
- (2) A sudden rise in price.
- (3) An uneasy feeling on the part of people generally as to work and means.
- (4) Looting was prevalent in certain areas, especially in the neighbourhood of Chimoor, Talodhi, Garchiroli and Bramhapuri. There were no grain loots occurred and these are rice districts.
- (5) People began to migrate in search of work and large numbers began to go to the Berars, so much so that the emigration had to be checked by Police agency.

I have no official papers from which the question.

personally I bought a new title and offered my services to the Deputy Magistrate. But I believe that (a) list of relief-works were ready, and that the works were actually located: as to surveys and estimates I cannot say.

(b) I don't know.

Q. 10.—Large public works were the backbone of the famine operations. A subsidiary system of village works was begun in March to draw people from camps back to their villages in preparation for agricultural operations. Whether this programme was ready from the beginning or not I cannot say, but it came into operation in good time.

Q. 11.—(a) Test works were opened first.

(b) Poor-houses were not opened at all.

(c) (1) Kitchens on works were opened concurrently with camps.

(2) Government civil kitchens were opened about the end of March, but small kitchens in connection with test works had been opened previously.

(d) Private charity began to be organised early in January 1900, but previous to that considerable sums had been subscribed by European officers in Chanda. This went to support a kitchen opened in connection with the test work in Chanda.

(e) Government forests were opened early, but I can't say when.

Q. 12.—(a) Patwaris, Mukaddams, Revenue Inspectors and Circle Officers were employed in preparing A lists. The Inspecting Officers were the Tahsildars, Assistant Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners. Latterly Charge Officers were appointed. Mr. Napier put this machinery in motion, but I understand that charges were defined and all the appointments made by Mr. Coxon in consultation with Mr. Hallifax, the Settlement Officer.

(b) Assistance was freely given to malguzars to build and repair village tanks at an early date in the famine.

(c) Charge Officers were instructed to form local committees in each charge who were to endeavour to raise funds. Meetings also were held in the various charges by Captain Roberts, Famine Assistant, to encourage the giving of donations. Captain Roberts made a special tour for the purpose.

(d) Special weekly reports were made on the condition of the people by Charge Officers, and Famine Assistants also made reports. Police reports also were sent in.

Q. 13.—Yes, loans were issued. To what extent I cannot say.

The loans were, I think, under the Land Improvement Act and were given to malguzars and landowners. I do not remember the conditions or how they were recoverable.

Q. 14.—I have seen irrigation wells in dry beds of nalas used chiefly to water vegetable gardens, but I do not think irrigation wells are used for agricultural operations on a large scale.

I can't say how far below the surface water was at the end of the rains in 1899, but the wells were very low. The digging of wells was encouraged, but it was for drinking purposes.

The Famine Council has a programme for sanitary wells which was vigorously prosecuted. Sanitary wells could give advance up to Rs. 100 for drinking wells in villages. Permanent.

It was as good as employing labour. Permanent wells require skilled work, and kitchen wells employed that for the employment of labour well digging is a mere domestic supply.

Q. 111.— tank bunds.

The work was taken by the District and Local Boards and by the Charge Officers. The works were under the supervision of such Charge Officers as Tahsildars and superintended by a member of the local district.

Q. 112.— the nature of the work. I can only speak of the tanks, which I personally supervised.

The work was dug and carried to the bund for Re. 0-4-0 distinction for previous occupation.

Q. 17.—Payment was made in proportion to results within certain limits, there was a maximum and a minimum wage and latterly a rest day allowance. No allowance was made to dependants, they were fed in the kitchen attached to the works on Ramala tank which was supported by private charity.

In replying to this portion of the paper, I must premise that my knowledge is confined to the three camps of Kothari, Chanda and Chichpalli and to Mr. Lowrie's forest camp which latterly entered the Charge. All these camps were within my famine charge, and I had to inspect them when made a Famine Assistant in addition to being Charge Officer.

Q. 19.—Large public works were first opened.

Q. 20.—They were under the control of Public Works Department officers. The establishment was ready. There was no delay in opening the works and tools and plant were available. Chanda camp was ready about a fortnight before it was opened.

Q. 21.—The three camps I know were not divided into charges.

In such camps as exceeded the maximum (either 7,000 or 5,000 workers I don't remember which) subsidiary camps were opened.

Q. 22.—Each camp had its own Officer-in-charge and establishment. The establishment consisted, as far as I remember, of (1) an Officer-in-charge, (2) clerk, (3) cashier, (4) Hospital Assistant and hospital staff, (5) kitchen staff, cooks, &c., (6) conservancy staff, (7) muharrirs and gang mates in proportion to the numbers. While (8) a Work Agent supervised the actual labour done.

In the three camps I have mentioned arrangements were not made for hutting until just before the rains. Conservancy and sanitation was adequate. The best system of sanitation was that adopted in Mr. Lowrie's forest camp where a trench was dug in a neighbouring rice field and filled with earth as it was used.

Stores of water were kept in small shelter houses near the workers. It was dispensed to the people in a tube. Water was supplied to these stores by water carts. The arrangements were admirable.

There were banias on the works when the camp was at a distance from the bazar.

A Hospital Assistant was in charge of the Medical Department and it was always efficient.

The Civil Surgeon and his Assistant were almost always on tour inspecting camps.

Q. 23.—The camps were open to all who were willing to submit to a labour test. No system of tickets was tried to my knowledge. Batches were occasionally given by Charge Officers to wanderers requesting the Officers in charge to admit them to the camps.

After the commencement of the rains a distance test was introduced, previously camps occasionally were close to bazars.

Residence on the works was not at first compulsory, but was afterwards made so.

Q. 24.—The two camps at Kothari and Chanda were roughly 20 miles apart. They served a district roughly 40 miles long by 15 to 20 broad. The population in each camp never exceeded 5,000, but this tract was less hardly hit than others in the district.

I should think that a camp of two charges each of 5,000 would supply a ten mile radius circle under almost any circumstances. Of course conditions vary with density of population on severity of famine. I should expect that one camp to every 500 square miles was enough.

Applicants came enormous distances for relief at first, but I think they wandered a good deal more than was necessary. I found a considerable number of that people in Chanda camp, and I understand that there was a considerable number of Chanda people in that camp. The two places are 30 miles apart.

One reason I ascertained was that people of fairly good position when obliged to seek relief in camps preferred to do it at a distance from their homes, being ashamed to be seen as common coolies. Another reason I have heard was that rumours got abroad that wages were lighter or work higher in this camp or the other and so people shied about.

The distance that people come for relief does not, in my opinion, have much bearing on the efficiency of relief measures in any particular district. I have found applicants for relief from Bhandara in Chanda Town itself, and they must have passed many camps on their way.

Q. 25.—I dont know—but I think not.

Q. 26.—In this question I am not quite sure what is wanted. The person in charge of a Public Works Department camp was called an Officer-in-charge and he was absolutely responsible for everything in the camp, but had no jurisdiction outside it. He was a Public Works Department subordinate.

The person who was in charge of a tract of country was called a Charge Officer, and he had no jurisdiction over Public Works Department camps within the limits of his charge.

Officers-in-charge of Public Works Department camps were generally students, failed B. A.'s and occasionally schoolmasters on leave.

Civil Charge Officers were usually Assistant Settlement Officers and Settlement Superintendents, people who knew land-revenue work. There were also three European Charge Officers in this district.

If by Civil Officer-in-charge is meant the man in charge of a Public Works Department camp, he had full authority to ascertain whether the orders of the Government were being carried out and also to check measurements, &c.

If a Civil Charge Officer is meant, I do not think he could inspect the camp in the way that a Famine Assistant did.

Q. 27.—The Officer-in-charge could prescribe tasks locally subject to the approval of his superiors in the Public Works Department. If a Civil Charge Officer was dissatisfied, he had to report to the Deputy Commissioner.

Q. 28.—Gangs of labourers were made up of men, women and working children, they were classed as Class I—diggers, Class II—carriers. A gang appointed its own mate. The gang usually numbered from 30 to 40. Every endeavour was made to form village and family gangs as much possible.

Q. 29.—I had no experience of the famine of 1897.

Q. 30.—This depends to a great extent on the people and their prejudices. In the Forest Camp, among the Maria Gonds, the women were classed, some of them at least in Class I. They were infinitely better workers since they do all the digging in their ordinary life, and the Maria himself does little manual labour. Here the classification of women as carriers is unfair, no would any objection have been made if the women had been paid an equivalent or more at a higher rate than the men.

Again amongst Mahars and Hindus the man is insulted if he does not receive at least one pice more than a woman, though he does a good deal less work.

There are not so many camps where a sex distinction of pay was not made.

Q. 31.—In all the free camps I have seen the system was "Intermediate" which means payment-by-results within limits: a maximum wage and a minimum wage were instituted. This system was in force from the outset, I believe.

Q. 32.—I had no experience of the 1897 famine, but in my opinion if famine works are begun sufficiently early, and workers were carefully classified with regard to previous occupation, a system of payment-by-results would be adequate to meet all the needs of the famine.

Q. 33.—I have no data bearing on the question.

Q. 34.—I should not care to say that the wage was unduly liberal, but if I may be permitted to state my opinion, it is that the system of calculating the wages on bazar rates for food-grain is open to much criticism. It for one thing puts the ultimate appeal as to what the wages shall be, in the hands of the local Baniyas, and I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that the famine prices on which the wage was calculated were to a great extent artificially high.

I have no evidence that the workers saved any appreciable sums, though, I believe, several came on the works when they still had considerable resources.

Q. 35.—A rest-day wage was given for the greater part of the time.

Q. 36.—I do not think that the minimum wage was too high except for reasons stated in answer to 33.

Q. 37.—I do not know. The penal wage did not become the wage generally earned in any of the camps I know.

Q. 38.—Payments were made daily.

Q. 39.—See above. Daily payments were made from the first so far as I know.

Q. 40.—To the head of the gang usually. This is, in my opinion, the best method if the gangs are village gangs or family gangs as they generally were in my experience.

Q. 41.—I have no data to give as a reply.

Q. 42.—I don't know.

Q. 43.—I don't know if children were kept in kitchens on the works. Weakly persons when capable of a little work were formed into "*weakly gangs*" which were paid at a special rate which was usually paid for at the minimum wage.

The minimum wage is preferable, because piece-work is very difficult to arrange.

Very weakly persons were put in the kitchen till able to do some work.

Q. 44.—I do not think contractors were employed except to supply materials for camp buildings like wood and bamboo matting, &c.

Q. 45.—Muster-rolls were kept.

Q. 46.—I think under the orders of the Deputy Commissioner who fixed it on the bazar rates for jari and rice.

Small variations in price were, I think, neglected. The basis of wages was fixed at the beginning of the month, and not altered unless there was urgent need.

Q. 47.—I can't.

Q. 48.—I don't know.

Q. 51.—Arrangements were made, but they consisted merely of giving people who were to be transferred to their villages wages for the way and Charge of the way either 14 days or one month's pay at minimum rates I think.

The people were wanted in their villages to be ready for agricultural work.

The transfer was not very successful until camps were shifted to 3 or 4 miles from the larger villages.

Proclamations were made in the camps that the camp was to be shifted and various inducements were offered, but in general people did not shift.

The reasons so far as I could learn were—

- (1) There was no prospect of steady work.
- (2) The people thought famine works were *kam'*.
- (3) In villages in the interior grain rates were high, and charges. There were from 5,000 to 6,000 people in the larger villages.
- (4) Wages offered by malguzars were much less than those offered by the Engineering Department.

Q. 52.—Village works were subsidiary to large Public Works Department works and were very useful in retaining a number of labourers in the villages and so prevented the land from being depopulated by Public Works Department camps.

Q. 53.—Tank works and small road works generally.

Q. 54.—They were conducted under the supervision of civil agency through malguzars and influential landowners.

Q. 55.—The work was first laid out by the Charge Officer, who appointed some person to keep the accounts under the supervision of the malguzar and a small panchayat. The work, if tank work, was generally measured out into "pasodis" or squares and the price for digging a square to a depth of 18 inches arranged by the Charge Officer.

The accounts were checked by the patwari, the Circle Officer and the Charge Officer on their visits. If properly begun the checking of measurements could be done in one hour by the Charge Officer. The wages were paid to the worker when he had finished his square.

• The landlord was responsible for the money given him in so far as he had to show so much work done for it.

Q. 56.—I never attempted to introduce a Code system myself. The scale of wages was settled by the *malguzar* in consultation with the Charge Officer. It was absolutely payment-by-results. A square of 5 *hāths* by one *hāth* deep was dug for 3 or 4 annas, varying with the difficulty of the work and quality of the soil, *i. e.*, about 100 to 114 cubic feet of earth was dug up and carried to a tank bund for 3 or 4 annas. The wages were much lower than on Public Works Department works, but then the men and their wives and children all worked and could earn their 6 and 7 pice a day usually.

Employment was given to all who wanted it.

Q. 57.—<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> lists of able-bodied men and women were kept in every village and that was all I think.

Q. 58. Sometimes the camp drew from the village and sometimes the village work drew labourers from the camp.

Q. 59.—I think village works are a most excellent form of relief and that they should be extended as far as possible.

(1) The term "means a source of wealth to the village afterwards and tends to obviate the recurrence of famine."

(2) The <sup>men</sup> are kept in their villages and family life is not broken up.

(3) On a large ~~village~~ <sup>place</sup> where a man can live much more cheaply because he knows how to eke out a village with roots, &c, from places in the jungle. When he does not know the jungle and cannot do this so well.

(4) <sup>price</sup> <sup>mainly</sup> <sup>working</sup> <sup>on</sup> <sup>a</sup> <sup>"pasodi"</sup> <sup>can</sup> <sup>and</sup> <sup>do</sup> <sup>make</sup> <sup>a</sup> <sup>living</sup> <sup>more</sup> <sup>cheaply</sup>  
than if <sup>the</sup> <sup>not</sup> <sup>member</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>a</sup> <sup>gang</sup> <sup>and</sup> <sup>paid</sup> <sup>a</sup> <sup>fixed</sup> <sup>wage</sup>.

(5) much smaller staff required to supervise, the work is much more economical. In a

Q. This system was extended to these people  
was ch... owrie, Divisional Forest Officer. He is trusted by them as

32—I had no experience, hence he was able to organise relief works among them which, in a very short time, were carried out by no one else in these districts. He induced them to work in a systematic manner, and had never done in their lives before, and his measures were a system of payment-by-work, which was new to them. He knew much about the details of the work, but he formed a forest of excellent roads.

Depa 33.—I have no data bearing on the opened. They were controlled by the Forest depôts for exportation.

34.—I should not care to say  
 ted to state my opinion, it is that y returned to their villages were employed in  
 weed od-grain is open to much criticism, not afford the necessary labour for their fields  
 could he wages shall be in the hands of the Government to do the work.

I think the extent artificially high.

Q. 63.—The Charitable Relief Fund Committee endeavoured to employ weavers by having clothes for the Fund woven locally; no other special endeavours were made.

Q. 64.—They showed little reluctance to go on works and when there, seemed to get on all right. They would not come back when they were wanted to weave.

Q. 65.—I don't think special relief to artisans was successful from what I have seen of it, nor do I think it an economical form of relief though, if properly organised, it might do very well.

Q. 66.—Forests were opened for grazing, and fodder was given as a takavi loan. A lot of cattle were lost, but if it had not been for the measures adopted more would have died. It was not so much fodder as water that was wanting.

Q. 67.—There was plenty of grass in the district.

Q. 68.—Dependants were relieved in kitchens on large public works and village works alike—

In Public Works Department works in the camp kitchen.

„ village works in the village kitchen.

Ration was always cooked, except in special cases where caste was obstinately adhered to.

Q. 69.—Gratuitous relief in money doles continued longest, but kitchens relieved the greatest numbers.

Kitchens were used on the score of economy I think.

Q. 70.—Gratuitous relief in the form of a money dole was given to—

(1) Sick, lame, aged and diseased persons unable to go to a kitchen.

(2) *Parda-nashin* people.

(3) People who rigidly adhere to their caste.

Class 3 was very small.

Gratuitous relief in kitchens was given to all who would accept cooked food. Of course those who were able to support themselves if found in a kitchen were turned out as soon as possible.

Q. 71.—No poor-houses in the district.

Q. 74.—I don't know. Kitchens were expected to serve a three-mile radius of the roads.

Q. 75.—A measure was provided in the kitchen which held three measures of food.

The rations were—3 measures ... Adults 9 chittaks, maximum

2½ „ ... 12 to 14 „ should be equal

2 „ ... 8 to 12 „ to 3 „ even. Q

1½ „ ... 5 to „ dependants of the worker,

1 „ ... „ food from the kitchens,

Curry was an addition and vegetable

One meal a day was given at a fixed hour. From the premises.

Q. 77.—Admission was free and unrestricted, except in opening the works. Tool charges.

Q. 75.—Village relief lists were drawn up by charges. There were from 5,000 they were checked by Charge Officers and Famine Assistants. Number exceeded 6,000; the village rations were checked at least once a month.

Q. 76 (a).—Payment was made in cash monthly at the homes of the recipients.

Q. 77 (a).—I don't know.

Q. 78.—Brahmins, Kunbis and Marals. Little reluctance was shown at any stage and none at all latterly.

Q. 79.—Police head constables, schoolmasters, malguzars. If possible the kitchen was managed by a punchayat of whom the president was responsible.

The kitchens were inspected by Circle Officers, Charge Officers and Famine Assistants. The Charge Officer was responsible for the working of the kitchen according to orders issued by the Deputy Commissioner.

Q. 80.—One cheap grain shop was opened in Chanda town. It was intended for classes whose income was under Rs. 10 per month principally, but exceptions to the rule were made.

Liberty to use the shop was given by tickets issued by the ward members and signed by them. Only a certain quantity of grain could be purchased in the shop.

The work cost a little over Rs. 2,000 and was successful.

Q. 81.—The cheap grain shop did not affect general prices, nor in any way discourage the importation of grain.

Q. 89.—Recipients of relief were of all classes—proprietors, ryots, tenants of all classes. They got relief either in the form of takavi or charitable relief gifts.

Q. 91.—Several cases have come to my notice of people who came on relief while they still had some money or jewels.

Q. 92.—No.

Q. 95.—I do not consider any method of selection for relief practicable.

Q. 96.—I think the impurity of the water was caused by its scarcity; people were glad of anything wet when they could get it. This, as I think, a concomitant cause of the mortality from dysentery, cholera and diarrhoea and other epidemics at the beginning of the rains.

Permanganate of potash was freely used.

Q. 100.—I came across a good many in the Chanda charge, but I have no data or statistics.

Q. 101.—What were not made over to friends, caste people and native institutions, are not in Chanda Mission Orphanage.

Q. 102.—I do not see such complaints were made.

Q. 103.—In a few cases, berts belonged to the Staff Corps.

Q. 104.—This system was a former question village works have much less tendency to disorder. This system was a former question village works have much less tendency to disorder.

Q. 105.—I have no experience, un sufficiently early, and have a system of payment—how much better.

ALEX. WOOD.

Q. 106.—I have no data bearing on.

Q. 107.—I should not care to say, I should not care to say, it is that grain is open to much criticism. The wages shall be, in the hands of the famine p, extent artificially high.



Q. 1.—There were no signs of famine in this district at the beginning of the rainy season. The harvests of the two preceding years were only fair.

Q. 2.—The kharif sowings were probably more than normal.

Q. 3.—(a) 50 inches. (b) 22 inches and 23 cents. The percentage was 44.46. (c) The rains ceased in the beginning of October.

Q. 4.—In the kharif harvest of the year 1899 very little *juari* was produced. It was only  $\frac{1}{2}$  an anna in the rupee. Cotton and black *tilli* were produced in some places. But it was not more than 3 annas in the rupee. The percentage of harvest is 12.

Q. 5.—In this district the percentage of field labourers to the total population is .90. (a) 23. (b) 67.

Q. 6.—The necessity of relief was assumed from the fact of crop failure.

Q. 7.—The number of beggars was increased. New beggars (who never begged before) were seen wandering about. Crowds of people from Native States and other districts were seen in the streets, and it was feared that they might loot the people. Besides, in the villages people of low castes began slaughtering the cattle. I have tried such cases and sentenced ~~the~~ accused. When all these facts were observed, it was thought necessary that the machinery of relief should be set in motion.

Q. 8.—The arrangements were made by the Government.

Q. 11.—(1) The Government forests were already open. The poor people were allowed to bring grass and fuel for sale from the forests. (2) In villages kitchens were opened. (3) In this district test works were introduced in one or two places, *viz.*, Choukdi, Piparia, Semarghat. (4) Arrangements for local charity were made in town.

Q. 12.—The arrangements were for the supervision of Government officers only.

Q. 13.—Takavi loans were granted to the poor cultivators who could make no other arrangements for money. But the ~~terms~~ of loans were not adequate, *i. e.*, as much as they (cultivators) required. Takavi ~~loans~~ of seed ~~was~~ given without interest. It is to be realized by two instalments.

Q. 14.—Irrigation wells were ~~granted~~ in the district: (a) on the condition of the depth of the well being ~~not~~ more than 20 and 30 feet. (b) No ~~charge~~ was levied on the ~~owner~~ of the well.

A. ii. said in life or to ~~the~~ people were ~~not~~ willing to be undertaken under the supervision of the Public Commissioner:—throwing of earth on roads, digging, &c.

January 1901. ding to results. The rule ~~was~~ that the maximum wage grain and the minimum ~~rate~~ should be equivalent. But wages were given up to 3 ~~per~~ even. On rest hittaks of grain. The dependants of the workers who did not like to take food from the kitchens were ~~not~~ of grain.

retariat Press. than in the came in numbers the test works were converted into ~~the~~ ed by the ~~the~~

under the control of the Engineering Department. There was no delay in opening the works. Tools and

ed into different charges. There were from 5,000 to ~~in~~ sometimes the number exceeded 6,000; the village relief works were opened.

Q. 22.—Each charge had its own establishment.

Details:—

One gang muharrir, he had from 300 to 500 labourers under his charge.

Two work agents and four assistant work agents.

Two head mates under each assistant work agent.

One clerk, one sub-khazanchi, one store-keeper.

One kitchen clerk, one Hospital Assistant, one compounder.

The huts were available in the rainy season only. The arrangement regarding food supply and water-supply was adequate. The sanitary arrangements were also good.

Q. 23.—Those who liked to work were admitted, but the people of the Native States found difficulty in getting admission. Residence on the works was not compulsory.

Q. 24.—A large public work with two charges containing 5,000 persons each will serve an area of 54 square miles. At first the applicants had to go a distance of 10 miles from their homes for relief; but when village relief works were opened they had to go a distance of 3 or 4 miles only.

Q. 26.—There was one Civil officer for each charge selected from among Munsiffs, Naib-Tahsildars, Deputy Clerks of Court, Revenue Inspectors, &c. Their salary was from Rs. 100 to Rs. 150. These men were under the Sub-Divisional Officer.

Q. 28.—In each gang there were from 30 to 50 persons including men, women, and children. Arrangements were made to make one gang of persons from one and the same village.

Q. 29.—Those who were unable to do the full task were classed in a separate gang. And those who could do the full task formed a separate gang.

Q. 30.—There appears to be no necessity of changing the wage of men and women for the present.

Q. 31.—The wages were given according to the whole day of work done. The weakly persons were in separate gangs. They got ordinary wages without any consideration of the amount of work they did—

(a) The two systems were carried on in the district.

(b) In some places—on one work.

Q. 32.—I agree with the opinion of the Famine Commission of 1898 regarding the system of payment.

Q. 34.—The scale of wages—*vis.*, the price of 16 chittaks of grain—now paid to the labourers is in my opinion inadequate, because when they returned to their homes their state of health was not such as it should have been. They did not save upon their earnings.

Q. 35.—Wages were given on rest-days. If they got no wages on rest-days they would have starved that day.

Q. 37.—At the outset minimum wage was allowed; but on account of fines the labourers got less than the minimum.

Q. 38.—The payment was made daily.

Q. 39.—The payment was made daily, but when cash was not received from the Tahsil Treasury in time, the payment was made after the interval of two or three days. The labourer had to borrow money from the Bania on the day on which no payment was made.

Q. 40.—Payment was made to the mukaddam, but in my opinion payment should be made to each labourer.

Q. 41.—When the labourers were fined and got wages less than the minimum, then they left the works and went to some other works.

Q. 43.—Kitchens were opened for the relief of the children, and the weakly persons were given minimum wages (price of 12 chittaks of grain).

Q. 44.—Contracts were given.

Q. 45.—Gang registers were kept, but the names of the labourers were not given in them.

Q. 46.—The Deputy Commissioner fixed the wages.

Q. 51.—When the number of labourers on large public works became too large, ~~new~~ labourers were <sup>drafted</sup> to the village works. There was no danger of any epidemic.

Q. 52.—When village works were opened the people of the surrounding villages were not required to go at a great distance. These village works were preferable to the large public works.

Q. 53.—Making *bandhs*, digging tanks, uprooting the ~~trubs~~ and kans grass from the fields.

Q. 54.—(a) The work of digging tanks was done in some places under the supervision of the Public Works Department.

(b) The works were conducted through malguzars.

Q. 55.—The malguzars were given a muharrir for laying down the work, for measuring it up and for paying wages, and both the malguzar and the muharrir were held responsible for the works. The Charge Officer controlled over them.

Q. 56.—The system of daily work was introduced in some places and the labourers (male) received one pice less than what the labourers on large public works received. When a village work was opened, people of the surrounding villages, within miles of the work, were employed on it.

Q. 57.—The system of selection of applicants for relief was not tried.

Q. 58.—No.

Q. 59.—More works should have been opened.

In my opinion it would have been better if small relief-works were started in every village.

Q. 60.—The number of Gonds and Kolus in the district is very great.

They got employment. They were willing to go to the works wherever opened. It was a great help to them.

Q. 61.—The forest works were controlled by forest authorities. The grass-cutting work was opened for them.

Q. 62.—Very seldom. They were under the supervision of ~~Chief~~ Officers (only in hilly tracts).

Q. 63.—Special measures to relieve artisans were not taken.

Q. 64.—Such people are not fit for labour.

Q. 66.—Nothing was done for the cattle.

Q. 68.—They were relieved in the kitchens.

Q. 69.—The kitchen system is the best. The cooked food which they get, according to the sanctioned scale, is eaten by them and it is not wasted. If they are given cash or uncooked grain they would find difficulty in procuring fuel, &c.

Q. 71.—There was no poor-house.

Q. 74.—A kitchen served the radius of 2 to 3 miles.

Q. 75.—Nine chittaks of uncooked *khichri* (1 part of dal and 5 parts of rice) was given to each man, woman and child above 14 years of age, after it was cooked, once a day between 12 and 2. They were required to feed on the premises.

Q. 76.—No limit was fixed. The distance between a civil kitchen and relief-work was the same as that between two kitchens.

Q. 77.—Admission to kitchens was free. Afterwards some of the men were discharged. Then again all who came to the kitchens were admitted. The healthy persons were discharged when their services were required for agricultural and other works elsewhere.

Q. 75a.—The relief lists were drawn up by mukaddams and patwaris. They were frequently checked by Circle and Charge Officers and also by the Deputy Commissioner when on tour.

Q. 76a.—Cash payments were made weekly, and latterly once a month. Payments were made at the homes of the recipients.

Q. 77a.—Relief was also given to the kotwars, because their dues were not realized on account of dearness of grain, and being Government servants they could not leave their village to go on relief works.

Q. 78.—The cooks in the kitchens were generally Brahmins. Some people (Gond, Bisnoi-Marwari) objected to take food cooked by Brahmins.

Q. 79.—The malguzar and the kitchen muharrir were in charge of the kitchen, under the supervision of the Circle and Charge Officers.

Q. 80.—The American Missionaries had opened a cheap grain shop.

Q. 82.—The land revenue in this district was not remitted: it was suspended in some places 60 per cent., and in others 50 per cent.

Q. 83.—The suspensions were based upon the crop failure, and the general capacity of the malguzars was also taken into account. I do not know how this general capacity was determined.

Q. 84.—The order of suspension of revenue was received after the February kist and before June kist.

Q. 86.—Any suspension of revenue relief has been given. The relief has not been abused.

Q. 87.—Owing to the failure of the rains the work of preparing land was stopped. The field labourers had no work. They went to relief works—then the number of persons in receipt of relief exceeded 15 per cent.

Q. 89.—15 per cent. of the tenants—occupancy and absolute occupancy, ryotwari tenants and some malguzars with their dependants were on relief works.

Q. 90.—People were ready to come on relief work because they had no means of support.

Q. 91.—Yes.

Q. 92.—No.

Q. 94.—Births and deaths are registered by the Police.

Q. 95.—The high mortality is attributable not to starvation but to unsuitable food, and cholera and small-pox.

Q. 96.—Impure and insufficient water-supply was the cause of increased mortality. In some places measures were taken to extend water-supply—(digging wells and *jhiras*): lime was used to disinfect wells.

Q. 97.—The sanitary arrangements were satisfactory. Mehtars (sweepers) were employed on large works. Flags were posted at a good distance. The village sweepers and carters kept the kitchens and the premises clean, under the supervision of the malguzar.

Q. 98.—The grain shops were inspected by the Officers-in-charge.

Q. 99.—For want of rain there were no wild products, consequently the people (forest tribes) came on relief works.

Q. 100.—People from Native States (Indore, Bhopal, Berar and Marwar) came on relief-works, but I do not know what was there number.

Q. 101.—I do not know.

Q. 102.—In this famine there were very few orphans: some of these were made over to the Missionaries.

Q. 103.—I do not know what suggestion is made in paragraph 527 of the Commission Report, and therefore I am unable to answer this question.

Q. 104.—There were no complaints.

Q. 104 (a).—The merchants brought grain from other parts of the country by railway and it was sufficient.

Q. 105.—I have heard no complaints.

Q. 106.—The kharif crops have increased this year, but the double-cropping has not increased.

Q. 107.—In this district the wages are paid in grain. The cash wages have fallen down because the number of labourers has increased.

Q. 111.—On account of fines, the labourers received smaller wages and they could not feed themselves properly, and have become very weak. It is probable that mortality among these might increase.

Q. 112.—The massing of people on large works tends to relax moral ties and the only remedy whereby this evil could be removed is to open small works in every village.

The 5th January 1901.

NARAIN RAO GOVIND.



Answers by F. S. A. SLOCOCK, Esq., I. C. S., Deputy Commissioner, Sambalpur,  
to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

Q. 1.—The outlook was good. The previous season had been good, and the season before excellent.

Q. 2.—Kharif sowings had shown steady increase throughout the preceding years, and there was a slight increase in 1899.

Q. 3.—(a) The average monsoon rainfall is Sadar 55 inches, and Bargarh 50 inches.

(b) The actual rainfall of 1899 was Sadar 45 inches, and Bargarh 37 inches. But no figures are available for the tracts where the failure was greatest. Neither Bargarh nor Sambalpur is in the affected tracts.

(c) The rains ceased in August.

(d) The rainfall from June to September, as compared with the average is shown below:—

				Average.
June	...	...	...	10
July	...	...	21	20
August	...	...	12	18
September	...	...	...	7

Q. 4.—The normal area sown with rice, taking the average of the previous five years in Khalsa and two years in Zamindari, as no earlier figures are available, as normal, was—

		Acres.
Khalsa	...	504,000
Zamindari	...	57,000
Total	...	561,000

The actual area sown in 1899 was—

	Acres.	Percentage.
Khalsa	12,000	10
Zamindari	397,000	11
Total	909,000	105 1/2

Multiplying this by the factors representing the actual outturn, the gross outturn represents a percentage of 36 of the normal outturn of the whole district.

Q. 5.—The percentage of the population depending exclusively on agriculture is shown below:—

	Per cent.
Cultivators owning land	53.6
Farm servants permanently employed	12.8
Day-labourers	0.5

Q. 6.—The necessity for relief was assumed from the fact of crop failure combined with the results of enquiries as to stocks of food, and the resources of the people, and observation of the condition of the labouring classes.

Q. 7.—The almost complete failure of food crops in certain tracts, the almost complete absence of any demand for agricultural labour, the tremendous rise in prices and difficulty in obtaining rice even for those high prices, the commencement of wandering, and the result of observation of the condition of the labouring classes.

Q. 8.—The first step was to draw up preliminary lists of persons likely to require relief in villages. The appointment of Circle and Charge Officers for the purpose of watching the condition of the people in the affected tracts followed, and as soon as it appeared necessary, kitchens were opened for the purpose of testing the reality of any immediate need for help.

Arrangements were made for meeting the increased demand for employment by the opening of a contract work, the starting of a test work from local funds, and by encouraging Gaontias to employ their villagers on useful village works, for which purpose loans under the Land Improvement Loans Act were given where necessary.

Q. 9.—(a) Lists of relief-works were ready. In the case of some large works, surveys and estimates were ready. In the case of small works, only rough estimates of their cost were made.

(b) Estimates of the scales of establishment likely to be necessary were prepared soon as the likelihood of relief measures being required became apparent. Lists of persons qualified for famine work were also prepared and kept ready.

Q. 10—Large works were to be the backbone of the relief system. A programme of age works had been prepared previously, subsidiary to the programme of large works.

Q. 11.—(a) Test works first in the sequence of relief measures. One was  
ned from District Council and two or three in the Court of Wards estates  
n estate funds.

(b) A poor-house was ~~in~~ quarters quite late in the famine.

(c) Test kitchens were established simultaneously with the starting of test works, both the works and elsewhere. For a work of any size was started, a kitchen was attached to it.

(d). The organisation of head-quarters town Committee of the Indian Fuel give employment to the labour with a large measure of success an early place in relief measures. In the which was afterwards turned into a Branch Fort was made to induce malguzars to of improvement and these efforts met

(c) As soon as the forests to free collection Government forest do not adj. Subsequently the for-  
 ognized, the opening of Government &c., was sanctioned. As the Govern-  
 s concession was the less important.

Q. 12.—(a) For villages or 10 parganas were appointed either members or special men

(b) Villa  
of local charity  
of the above state

Q. 13.—Loans were almost entirely for the construction of railways or impoundment Loans? A. Not all were given for the construction of railways; some were recoverable in whole.

Loans were not made here as kharif. They were given as land improvements and were given chiefly till the hot weather, as the Government intended to buy or loans for buying cattle. Nearly all was distributed by the muzar class, and in a few cases to the poor by given for ryots.

Q. 14.—Irrigation wells are not common in this district, nor are the conditions of the climate or the temperament of the people suited to their use.

Nothing was done in the way of construction of irrigation wells.

Q. 15.—Road works in the District Court staff, which works under the Division.

They were managed by the Superintendents on what is called the intermediate system. There was also one road work of contract under the Public Works Department management.

Q. 16.—The tasks to be performed were those laid down in Public Works Department Circular, but generally tasks were fixed somewhat in excess of those rates. Workers were classed according to their physical condition and previous occupation. Women were



put in the carrier class invariably. The task exacted was according to the class of the labourer. All labourers of the same class had to give the same task irrespective of sex and previous occupation.

Q. 17.—Payment was in proportion to results. There was no minimum wage, nor rest-day allowance, nor allowance to dependants: dependants could attend the kitchen.

Q. 18.—As soon as the test kitchens and test works proved the existence of actual severe distress, the affected tracts were recognized as distressed and regular relief-works were sanctioned.

Q. 19.—Both large public works and small village works were opened.

Q. 20.—The local fund test work was converted into a regular relief-work, and handed over to the Public Works Department.

The Public Works Department contract work continued as such for some time, until it became apparent that it would be better managed as a regular relief-work.

One large work was opened under Civil agency as conducted in professional matters by the Executive Engineer, Chhattisgarh States Division, as conducted by the Executive Engineer, Chhattisgarh States Division.

Three small works were managed directly to the lines of a Public Works Department work by Civil agency.

The other small village works were handed over to the management of malguzars. Arrangements were made in advance for the necessary establishment, tools and plant, and no unnecessary delay occurred.

Q. 21.—The maximum ever reached in this district was about 5,000, so no over-pressure was experienced, and the work was divided into charges.

Q. 22.—The establishment on Civil agency work was as shown in the following table:

1. The Officer-in-charge ... ..
2. The Work Agent ... ..
3. The Tools Muharir ... ..
4. The Clerk under the Officer-in-charge ... ..
5. Gang Muharirs.

Material for putting on the work; hutting materials for protection of workers in the rains were obtained and supplied to them. Special conservancy gangs were formed: wells were dug and arrangements for their protection made. Baniyas were induced to open shops on the works for sale of food, &c.

Q. 23.—Admission was free: no system of selection nor distance test was tried. Residence on the work was not compulsory.

Q. 24.—I think it is better to have two separate works to accommodate 5,000 workers each than to have one work of two charges. So far as this district is concerned, I think one such large work supplemented by the far more useful village works can easily serve an area of 300 to 400 square miles with a population of 1,00,000.

Q. 25, 26 and 27.—Not answered.

Q. 28.—The standard gangs were 30 to 40 strong; but in the Civil agency work, gangs were at first 70 or 80 strong, and this arrangement was found to work well enough. So far as possible village and family gangs were secured, and no difficulty was found in arranging this.

Q. 29.—Labourers were classified in the manner laid down in paragraph 445, but one modification was made, namely, the raising of the top limit of age of working children to 14, and the bottom limit to 10, instead of 12 and 8 respectively. The wage scale was that laid down in paragraph 456, but the digger's wage was afterwards reduced to 19 chittaks.

Q. 30.—I do not think it advisable to differentiate the classification and wages of men and women; women workers are able as carriers to do as much work as the men classed as carriers.

The absence of such distinction, so far from leading to any difficulty, simplified matters.

From a financial point of view it was found that the distinction between the wage rates of men and women would make no perceptible difference in cash wages.

Q. 31.—Task system was not in force in any work in this district except in the case of weakly gangs, which were specially constituted. All works were run throughout on the intermediate system.

Q. 32.—I think that a system of payment by results is quite suited to conditions of acute distress, though the Code task system must also be worked side by side with it to meet the case of weakly workers.

Q. 33.—The full task was exacted from the outset and no allowance was made. New arrivals were fed in the kitchen or given minimum wage for day of arrival. During hot weather a lighter task was exacted; in the rains, the task was raised with a view to discourage those who might get work in the fields from hanging-on.

Q. 34.—The wage scale was in my opinion adequate, though I think the digger's wage might safely be reduced to 18 chittaks. There is no doubt that workers did save money, though not to any great extent, so far as I am aware. Where a whole family comes on a work, it is natural that their related earnings will enable them to save money; no doubt single workers also manage to save, but it would be unsafe on that ground to say the wage is too liberal. Copper coins were not used in the Banias on works.

Q. 35.—Neither method

Q. 38.—Payment was made for a worse day from the first. I did not find that payment, otherwise than by the method I should prefer daily payments invariably.

Q. 40.—Payment was made to the gangs were paid individually.

Q. 42.—The system in force was that detailed in paragraph 208 of the report, but it was not found to be in working as it is there said to be. If the Officer-in-charge understands the system, he can fix the gang's task, the labour test applies equally to diggers and carriers: the labour test were kept, nor were they needed.

Q. 43.—Children between 10 and 12 years of age were classed as working children, and worked with the ordinary gangs. They were fed as dependants at the kitchens. Weakly persons capable of some work were formed into weakly gangs. They were given light task and paid carriers' wages, subject to fines down to the minimum only.

Q. 45.—Musters were not kept up. The registers were sufficient.

Q. 46.—By the Deputy Commissioner on the price of rice only. Small variations were neglected: at no time did the wage base exceed 9 seers.

Q. 51.—Not in this district.

Q. 52.—Village works were opened in one part as subsidiary to a Public Works Department work, and elsewhere as more suited to the needs of the people in the jungly tracts. They employed on the average an equal number of workers with the large works.

Q. 53.—Nearly all were 'atas' or in ponding reservoirs.

Q. 54.—They were under the management of the Civil Department only. The majority were managed through malguzars and a few, in places, where it was necessary, were under direct management.

Q. 55.—The work to be done was roughly surveyed and an estimate of its cost was made. The position and dimensions of the bund were explained to the malguzar, who easily understood such congenial work, and the place where the earth was to be dug from pointed out to him.

The payments were made on piece-work system, at a rate per *dangni* or pit. The standard *dangni* was either 70 or 100 cubic feet. The workers worked by families, and the head of the family was paid for the number of completed *dangnis* turned out each day, the measurement of which was a simple thing for the malguzar. Wages were paid daily. The malguzar was given an advance for the purpose, and when this was nearly exhausted, it was recouped, if possible, after the measurements of the work completed had been made; if not, without them; but in that case measurements would be taken afterwards. The malguzar was entirely responsible for managing the work, paying the wages, keeping a simple daily register of workers and outturn and payments, and sending weekly returns. He was also held responsible if the value of work done was found on measurements to be less than the expenditure as alleged by him. But no case of this nature occurred. The Charge Officers supervised these works.

Q. 56.—No.

Q. 57.—For village works, lists of persons suitable for employment on them were drawn up and checked by Circle Inspectors and Charge Officers. The malguzar in charge of the work was informed that he should only employ such persons from a certain number of adjoining villages on his work, and was directed to send other applicants to the Public Works Department work if there was one, or if not, to the Circle Officer, for being placed on the village work list. This was in order to prevent crowding of village works, and was successful at the same time, by keeping the rates at a sufficiently low figure, these village works were by no means too attractive.

Q. 58.—No doubt had there been no village works, many of those working on them would have gone to the large works, but as a rule village works attracted a different class of persons, men who, without the employment afforded by them, would have stayed at home and steadily deteriorated in condition, unless Government would have had to come on gratuitous relief.

Q. 59.—So far as the value of work, village works are far the best. The work is of a useful nature, and it is only in some parts of this district it is the only work which can suitably be carried out.

In other parts, village works are most suitable to a large work. There is always a risk of their being too attractive, and they have to be kept as low as possible, and this very fact militates against them. The only other form of work, as weakly persons who are not fit for a full season in the field, or of gratuitous relief, cannot get relief from them and deteriorate till they have become fit for gratuitous relief. To prevent this occurring, gratuitous relief would have to be given more freely than is perhaps advisable.

Subject to these limitations, I regard village works as the most suitable form of relief work.

Q. 60.—There are a good many in this district, but they are not very wild. They were not forward to take relief, but were successfully calmed and the ordinary relief measures were in force in the tract.

Q. 61.—No.

Q. 62.—No.

Q. 63.—No.

Q. 66.—There was not great mortality among castes in this district and no special measures were necessary.

Q. 68.—Dependants were relieved almost entirely in kitchens both on works and in villages.

Q. 69.—Kitchens. Because they are cheaper; can be better organised and checked, and less likely to lead to abuses, and because the very fact of attendance at a kitchen is a kind of test which proves the reality of the need for relief in case of all except lowest castes.

Q. 71 and 72.—One. It was opened in July. It was opened at head-quarters owing to the large number of wanderers who congregated there. The best attendance in it was 524. The great majority of persons in the poor-house were immigrants. The poor-house was opened shortly before the closure of all works.

Q. 73.—Gangs of inmates fit to be sent to their homes were periodically sent away under escort.

Q. 74.—Before the rains there were 110 kitchens open: 146 more were opened after the rains. After the rains a kitchen served a radius of 2 miles as a rule.

Q. 75.—The ration provided was boiled rice with dal, and occasionally vegetables, whenever procurable. If no vegetables were procurable, some anti-scorbutic, such as tamarind, was given.

Meals were given once a day during the cold weather and rains, and twice a day in equal proportions during the hot weather. People had to eat their food on the premises.

Q. 76.—No limit of distance was fixed within which kitchens could not be opened.

Q. 77.—Admission was restricted till the rains. In the early part of the rains free admission was allowed, but was stopped as soon as the prospects of the ensuing season seemed assured and the necessity arose for restricting relief. Admission to kitchens could be procured only by the order of a Circle Inspector or Charge Officer, except in the case of an emaciated person. The Circle and Charge Officers gave their tickets to those needing them on their periodical inspections of villages.

Q. 74.—The poor-house ration was the same as the kitchen ration, but was varied in all cases requiring special treatment.

Q. 75.—The village relief lists were drawn up by patwaris and checked by Circle Inspectors and Charge Officers. Circle Inspectors had to visit every village in the district once a fortnight.

Q. 76.—The village relief was given in the form of a dole for one month. There was given here very little. I am aware of this.

Q. 77.—Village relief was given in the form of a dole for one month. There was given here very little. I am aware of this. The village relief was given in the form of a dole for one month. There was given here very little. I am aware of this. The village relief was given in the form of a dole for one month. There was given here very little. I am aware of this.

Q. 78.—As a rule Br. would as a rule only. I should prefer daily payments invariably.

Most of the caste-people in this district, where the population is chiefly Ch. think this method works well. Weakly

Elsewhere the reluctance was partly due to fear of contamination. The system detailed in paragraph 208

Q. 79.—The kitchen were placed in working as it is there said to be. fix the gang's task, the labour test were kept, nor were they needed.

The accounts were kept by a paid clerk. The work were classed as working children, and were fed as dependants at the

Q. 80 and 81.—No such shops. formed into weakly gangs. They were fined down to the minimum only.

Q. 82.—Revenue was suspended to the extent of registers were sufficient. total revenue of the district. The revenue of the area in question amounts to only Rs. 45,000, and the amount suspended represents. Small variations were

Q. 83.—Suspensions were based on crop failure. The amounts of revenue in favour of each tenant were worked out, and the revenue remitted was proportional to the total so arrived at. The rent suspension statements were checked by Revenue Inspectors, Tahsildars, Charge Officers and Superintendent of Land Records.

Q. 84.—Before collection.

Q. 85.—Suspensions of rental were determined as first, and the suspension of revenue was determined by the amount of rent suspended.

Q. 86.—No.

Q. 87.—The largest number on relief of all kinds at one time was 93,000, which represents 11.8 per cent. on the 1891 population of the district, and 21 per cent. on the recorded population of the affected tracts.

This percentage is not to be accepted, however, as the actual population affected was undoubtedly much larger. The following are reasons for the large percentage.

The time was August, which was the turning point in the famine. Rain had been scanty, and another bad season was anticipated by the people. There were considerable numbers of persons from Feudatory States receiving relief in the district.

Admission to kitchens was free at the time, and this fact was taken advantage of by the lower castes.

Q. 88.—I don't think relief was at any time defective.

Free admission to kitchens undoubtedly allowed many persons to get relief, who did not really need it; but on the other hand, the condition of people deteriorates so rapidly during the rains that this condition was necessary, if we were to be on the safe side. Looked at in this light relief was not excessive.

Q. 89.—In the jungly tracts the classes on relief included thekadars and tenants of aboriginal castes. In the Lehriya or Chamar tracts also tenants came on relief, elsewhere the tenant class did not come on relief except during the critical time in August, when they followed their children to feed in kitchens.

Q. 91.—I do not think there was much inclination among those who had resources to except from this the Ganda and Chamar castes who have no scruples or would have gone.

Q. 92 and 93.—The tests are sufficient. No amount of tests are good, if the staff to apply them are not good. Existing tests and a good Executive Officer are required.

Q. 94.—The work which can suitably be carried out by the Police through the district is as follows:—

In other parts, village works are most successful. It is always a risk of their being too attractive, but as far as possible, and this very fact militates against it, as weakly persons who are not fit for a full day's work, come on relief from them and deteriorate. This occurring, gratuitous relief would be inadvisable. The incidence and variable-advantage of better-off classes of people.

Subject to these limitations, I regard the work as assisted by an unstable or insufficient staff, who were pretty numerous.

Q. 60.—There are a good many. They were not forward to take relief, but relief measures were in force in the tracts. The stoppage more difficult. Katcha wells were rarely used.

Q. 61.—No.

Q. 62.—No.

Q. 63.—No.

Q. 66.—There was no special arrangement for cooking. At kitchens there was always measures were necessary.

Q. 67.—The Officer-in-charge of a work and the Police Superintendent were responsible for the sanitary arrangements. There was an Inspecting Medical Officer appointed for the purpose of inspecting these and other arrangements and for effecting improvements where needed.

Q. 98.—Officers-in-charge were responsible for seeing to the supply of grain. In one case bad grain was found in store at a work and destroyed. As a rule, the Banias behaved well in this respect.

Q. 99.—Mahua flower, of which the crop was a moderate one, was their chief standby. They lived on it and also were able to make money by its sale. They say themselves that mahua is like rice and dal to them.

It is a very fattening food and the numbers on relief decreased during the harvest. So far as I am aware, no evil results ensue from a staple diet of mahua. Mangoes, an excellent crop this year, tendu, a bumper crop, and roots were also a staple diet for a large number of people during the hot weather in the more jungly tracts. This sort of diet naturally has bad effects, and it is partly to this cause that the fatal effects of the epidemic dysentery may be attributed. There is no doubt that numbers who would otherwise have come on relief maintained themselves entirely on jungle produce. This is an annual custom with them.

Q. 100.—There was a considerable amount of immigration from surrounding States throughout the year. In kitchens along the southern border of the district, the outsiders formed 10 to 20 per cent. of the total on relief, and some kitchens were attended almost entirely by outsiders. It is estimated that from May the number of foreigners on relief varied from 5 to 10 per cent. of the whole number relieved.

has failed to exclude reputed well-to-do persons, he can be called to account, but if he is able to reply—"So and so was well-to-do, but he has been very hard hit by the famine, and if he is struck off, he will have to eat his seed," the officer's hands are much more tied. It may be said that such persons could go to public works, but when this measure was inaugurated, the public works had been swamped and temporarily closed to admission. Local experience was that people were only too ready to go to public works in preference to village works, and if the public works had been open, there was no advantage in driving people from a cheaper to a more expensive form of relief. The reduction effected was very small: all mates suspected of being able to maintain themselves without Government relief were reduced from their posts. There was great outcry at this by the tank muharrirs, who said that they could not keep their tanks in order without mates of some authority. This was true, but the measure was insisted upon. Finally, all mates were made to do a digger's task.

Undoubtedly there were persons on work relief who would have starved if struck off, but on my experience all the more flagrant cases were on the Public Works Department charges, where there were easy billets such as chaprassis, guards for money and water, and a higher rate of pay. On village works there were no such easy billets except mates, and when these were compelled to do a digger's task, the last and only temptation was removed.

Q. 58.—People flocked from villages to public works directly the latter were opened within such distance that they could return to their homes once a week. The wage was higher, and at times the task was lighter, generally due to the great numbers that poured in. At the Kumhari tank, I had a work camp opened, 1,000 men at once; the remaining 500 all belonged to Kumhari and did not go because they wanted to complete their tank at Government cost. They were kept together by a few of the better tenants. I could quote numbers of such cases. Also please see my answer to question 51.

Q. 59.—In my answer to question 50 I have shown some of the points in which village works are more economical than public works. The benefit to the district and the gratitude of the people for these village works is beyond dispute. In a famine as intense as that of 1899-1900, it was not desirable to undertake works at a less cost than Rs. 2,000, which sum would support 800 people for six weeks, and would give a fairly large and useful tank. Such projects must of course by degrees be exhausted, and in portions of the Raipur tahsil, I had difficulty in arranging for new sites. I think that if the necessity for work should arise again and shortly, recourse would have to be made to embanking and terracing rice land, a form of work which is difficult to measure up and control, or that schemes for larger tanks to be filled by short canals from nalas in the rains must be drawn up. For such works the assistance of Engineers would be necessary, and they would probably be placed under the Public Works. I think small village works very desirable, but the supply for the present is to a great extent exhausted. Irrigation is very little resorted to in this district in a year of normal rainfall. Very few tanks were opened this year. In a year of short rainfall, the tanks, unless they have a good catchment area, only half fill and are useless at the pinch. Sites with good catchment areas are exhausted in many parts. The true local irrigation is by means of tals or petty canals taking off from nalas, but these have mostly fallen into disuse and disrepair of late years owing to laziness or quarrels. The bund at the take-off should be of masonry with gates, and this of course is not suitable as a famine work. There are two cases in which malguzars have made such masonry bunds with gates, kept open during heavy rain—one during this famine, and one in the last famine. I arranged for another, but owing to the opposition of an important landholder the work was not carried out. Otherwise the natives make bunds of earth after the heavy rain, and these are washed away every year. Streams are treated in this way in parts of Bombay, and several bunds (or sort of weir) being made along the course of each stream, and the water drawn off almost parallel to the course of the stream.

I believe that in parts of the district, pumping would be quite feasible, and would repay the cost. For these distributary canals would be necessary and would afford a certain amount of small village works.

Q. 87.—The number of persons in receipt of relief exceeded 15 per cent. of the population affected from the time that relief operations were at all fully developed.

Parts of the district had been hardly hit by the famine of 1896-97, but this does not explain the collapse in Dhamtari. There the crop of 1896-97 had been fair, and with high prices, great profits were made by malguzars and substantial tenants. In 1897-98 and 1898-99 bumper crops had been obtained, and yet on the failure of 1899-1900, the Dhamtari tahsil went down hopelessly. More being expected of it, it perhaps received less attention at first, with the result that cases of emaciation became marked, and the tahsil had to be treated with especial tenderness in the matter of the wage basis. The first part of the last sentence I write without any authority. I have through ill health had only one day to answer these questions, and have had therefore no time to show the above to the Deputy.

Commissioner. It is however substantially correct that emaciation appeared in Dhamtari to a serious degree, and that the wage basis was consequently fixed higher, *viz.* at 12½ to 11, in the rest of the district. The fact is important in its bearing on this question.

I do not then consider the famine of 1896-97 an important factor in determining or causing the demand for relief in 1899-1900.

If it had been decided to supply part of the relief by means of land improvement or famine loans, I should have had something to say both as to the effects of the famine of 1896-97 in impairing credit and as to the demerits of the malguzari system in a crisis such as this. But the case has not arisen and the fact remains that Dhamtari fell equally and ~~as much as Raipur, Drug and Simga.~~

In the tract allotted to me, of about 800 villages, in one pargana—Khallari—there were about 40 villages out of 80 which had a crop of over 2 annas. In the remaining 720 villages there were not more than 20 villages which had a 2-anna crop, taking kharif and rabi together, and the rest had practically nil. In 1896-97 the failure was not nearly so complete; many villages had a 2 to 4-anna rice and kharif crop, and the rabi was fair with a bumper wheat crop on the area sown. This constant village by village marked difference. With a 6-anna average, there would be no mention of famine to the district, although there might be difficulty in the collection of rent and revenue to emphasize this point by comparison of the figures for the Khallari pargana with the rest of my charge.

I attribute the break-down to the crop failure. One has to think, not of the labourer and hand-to-mouth tenant, but of the man who has resources to face a year's total failure. No one but the malguzars and A class tenants, and not always these, for they make no recoveries in a year such as this.

Q. 88.—When I first took over charge I found a good deal of emaciation and Circle Officers putting people on gratuitous cash relief as fast as they could recoup money from Raipur in self defence. The figure was as high as 15 per cent. in many villages. I could strike none of them off, but marked 12 out of the 15 per cent. as fit for work when recovered. This was due to a hitch in accounts and to delay in opening public works. The Deputy Commissioner followed on my report and two camps were opened, which were swamped with 15,000 on each, although in the meantime numbers of village works had been opened.

Later on there was no emaciation except amongst infants, who are very difficult to deal with.

I do not think relief was ever excessive during the cold weather and hot weather. A few were holding easy billets as mates, chaprassis, water guards, and money guards, who were not in absolute need of relief; but for such posts men of some influence are required, and it is cheaper to pay them 7 pice a day as famine labourers than 5 rupees a month as part of the establishment. Others who were doing a coolie's hard task for a famine wage might have got through without starving, but I firmly believe that to have turned them off because they had a pair of bullocks and a little grain would have made a marked difference in the area brought under crop, and the employment subsequently afforded thereby.

In the rains free admission was given to all at kitchens, with the view that all agricultural operations should be duly carried out and that people should not suffer by the necessary closing of village works and should be induced to quit the Public Works charges. The Chamars came in *en masse* and gave a great deal of trouble. I caused all non-cultivators to work for their food by consolidating tank bunds, repairing incipient breaches, and in other ways, and afterwards excluded them altogether on guarantees from malguzars and substantial tenants to employ them at forced wages for fixed periods. The latter were urgent for this, as they said they could not get work out of men who could go off to a kitchen for their food and who could in fact use the delays of the kitchen as an excuse for not working. At this stage relief was overdone, or at any rate it was most demoralizing. I should prefer free kitchens for tenants only, or, for choice, larger advances to them, and the roads kept open for consolidation for labourers. If larger takkavi advances are out of the question, then timid lenders might be encouraged by assessment guarantees for recovery or repayment; but it would seem that money ought to be just as easily obtained for recoverable advances as for direct expenditure on free kitchens to all. If held that tenants would be overburdened by heavier advances, I cannot agree; they take ten times the amount for their own ceremonies, recovery from famine is almost as sharp as the collapse, and it is demoralizing that they should come out of such a famine, enhanced in large measure by their own want of thrift and foresight, with no obligations that cannot be wiped out by one year's good harvest.

Q. 89.—All classes of tenants were included amongst the people on relief and some proprietors. There are very few State ryots: they were practically all on relief.



Q. 90.—I found people in the last famine quite ready to come on relief when distressed. I did not notice any greater readiness on this occasion. They were better acquainted with relief and gave more trouble, e. g., Chamars insisting on Chamar cooks and refusing to eat food cooked by Brahmins. Adult Hindus, i. e., over the marriage age, refused for the most part to eat cooked food until caste cooks were introduced. These persons caused me the only serious anxiety I had during the famine. No doubt they were stiffened in their opposition by the extremely liberal but necessary issue of cash doles before the famine organization was complete, but as it was out of the question to give way to them, many of them were tried very far before they came to terms.

Q. 91.—Credit certainly contracted. Many small lenders were broken by the famine of 1896-97. ~~More~~ bigger men were brought to grief by this famine. ~~I was told by~~ different lenders that they would not and could not risk any ~~more~~ advances unless recovery was guaranteed. I hear now that nothing like the usual advances were forthcoming.

Q. 92.—I would lower the scale of wages on public works, but I think that as the tests stand, they are sufficient. I believe that if test works were opened ~~now~~ all over the district, no one but casual labourers would go to them. It may be said that they have other and more profitable occupations at this time, and ~~not~~ not in a famine; but during April and May they have no such occupations, and the majority of them pass their time doing nothing.

Q. 97.—The people supplement their food with various herbs, berries and fruits, and in jungly parts with mahua and roots. On the approach of the hot weather mahua causes heat and makes them very liable to purging, which may result in death. Many deaths attributed to cholera are often due to an unwise use of mahua and mangoes.

Q. 105.—Malguzars anticipated that they would not be able to get work out of labourers by paying wages, so long as they were allowed to get free food at kitchens. In anticipation of sanction I was arranging for malguzars to take over lists of labourers on forced wages for fixed periods, when I fell ill and had to go on sick leave.

Q. 106.—Double-cropping depends on the rainfall. There has been no change. Kodon (a small millet) and rahar (dal) have to a considerable extent taken the place of rice and wheat, but this is quite temporary and due to the two famines.

Q. 107.—Wages are paid in grain. I have noticed no tendency to substitute cash payments for grain.

Q. 111.—(a) Work was on the intermediate system throughout.

(b) The task was raised sharply both on public works and village works about the end of January with no result except for complaints and temporary refusals to do the task.

(c) The scale of wages was slightly lowered about the same time, with no diminution of numbers.

(d) The method of calculating prices was always the same.

(e) Drafting was resorted to only just before the rains broke. If the distance was at all great (over 10 miles) the people returned to their homes; or rather most of them did so. As the measure was undertaken with this object, other influences may have been at work unperceived. In any case, the time had arrived at which all who could afford to do so were returning to cultivate.

None of these measures had any effect on the death-rate within my experience. No disorganization or wandering was caused.

RAIPUR:

The 5th January 1901. }

E. R. K. BLENKINSOP,

Settlement Officer.



Answers by Captain L. W. S. OLDHAM, R. E., Executive Engineer, Jubbulpore/  
Division, to questions drawn up by the Famine Commission.

[NOTE—These replies relate to the Public Works Department Relief Works of the Jubbulpore Division]

Q. 19.—Public works and village works were opened simultaneously in different parts. These two classes of works were kept quite distinct, and, as a rule, were confined to separate tracts.

Q. 20.—Village works were under the Civil authorities; public works were in the hands of the Public Works Department. The fullest instructions had been issued in the "General Order" relating to the conduct of relief works. Every detail of establishment, organisation and supplies of all kinds had been laid down with minute care.

In my experience there was no delay in getting the required establishment. A short notice was asked from the Civil authorities before a new relief work was required to be opened. The necessary arrangements for hutting, supplies, tools, cash, and for marking out tasks beforehand were then made; and when the camp was announced as open, all was ready.

Q. 21.—Yes. A charge was limited to 5,000. When this number was exceeded, a new charge was opened and the surplus drafted.

Q. 22.—Establishment for a charge—

- (1) Officer-in-charge,
- (2) One Clerk,
- (3) One Gang Muharrir to each 500 workers,
- (4) One Tools Muharrir,
- (5) One Kitchen Muharrir,
- (6) One Hospital Assistant,
- (7) Two Work Agents (Sub-Overseers),

and say two Sub-Work Agents (Mistries or Timekeepers). Instructions in the minutest detail had been issued, *vide* official publications on the subject of hutting, water-supply, conservancy, &c.

Q. 23.—Admission was practically free throughout. For a short time a system of admission by ticket, to those living within a specified distance of the camp was in force; but was afterwards abandoned as unnecessary.

Residence on works was at no time compulsory.

Q. 24.—It is impossible to say what is the "Drawing area" of a relief work. In Seoni, however, on two occasions, a census taken on works, showed that the villages between 5 and 20 miles from the work sent a larger contingent per village, than the villages 0 to 5 miles from camp.

If distress is acute, the people do not mind travelling, and are willing to be drafted away to comparatively distant works.

Q. 25.—Officers of the Public Works Department were in no sense subordinate to the Civil authorities. With the Commissioner rested the power of settling what items of the Famine Programme were to be taken in hand, and the general direction of relief operations.

For the management and organisation of the large public works relief work, however, the Public Works Department were alone responsible.

Q. 26.—Each charge was under the management of an Officer-in-charge. He was appointed by the Commissioner and was supposed to have the standing of a Naib-Tahsildar. His pay was Rs. 100 per mensem with a monthly increment, at discretion of the Executive Engineer, of Rs. 10. Once appointed, the Officer-in-charge was directly responsible to the Sub-Divisional Officer of the Public Works Department, and to him rendered all his returns, accounts, &c.

For the time being he became a Public Works subordinate.

He was entirely responsible for the management and organisation of his charge.

It is not too much to say that the success or otherwise of famine relief administration depends enormously on the class of man employed as Officer-in-Charge. In the Jubulpore Division we were singularly fortunate in this respect.

Q. 27.—Yes, subject to approval of Inspecting Officers.

Q. 28.—Thirty in a gang. The relief workers were told to form their own gangs, and elect their own Mate, and were happy to do so. Proportion of diggers to carriers depended on "lift" and "lead."

Q. 29.—Classification and wage scale was the same as that laid down in paragraph 445 of the Report of Famine Commission of 1898, except that 14 years was the age fixed for admission of children to Class II.

Q. 30.—No rigid distinction. The actual classification was —

Class I—Diggers.

" II—Carriers.

(a) Women can't and won't dig.

(b) Weakly men are classed as carriers.

(c) It undoubtedly offends the native's idea of propriety to be told he can only earn the same wage as his wife.

Q. 31.—The "Intermediate" system was the only one in force from first to last.

Q. 32.—Payment by result was the system in force from first to last throughout the famine, and answered well. I am most emphatically of opinion that this system is perfectly feasible where relief measures are taken in *ample time before any symptoms of emaciation and consequent weakness occur.*

Q. 33.—At the outset a task of 70 cubic feet was exacted from all and easily done. This was soon raised to 80 cubic feet. Later in some places 90, 100 and even 110 cubic feet were exacted without trouble. No advance was made for the distance the workers had to travel. They lived on the work or at home at their pleasure.

The tendency was to raise the task as the workers became used to the work and finished their tasks with greater ease.

For two months in the hottest weather the task was reduced to 70 cubic feet in most charges of the Seoni District; but was again raised when the rains broke.

Q. 34.—In any opinion there is no question that the scale of wages is unduly liberal. No man can eat 20 chhittaks of grain. To give a famine labourer a larger ration than a stalwart sepoy on active service is paradoxical. The condition of the workers was excellent, and the death-rate in the Public Works Camps was, in the case of one district 5 per cent. per annum, a truly phenomenal rate.

There is no doubt they saved; from my own personal enquiries among different classes of workers, I am of opinion that it is very rare for a worker to spend his full wage.

Q. 35.—A rest-day wage was given almost without exception.

I am not in favour of a rest-day wage. It is out of place in a system of payment by results, and is seldom necessary.

Q. 36 and 37.—These questions did not arise. Fines for short work were of comparatively rare occurrence. For the most part the workers did their full tasks cheerfully, and were anxious to earn their full wage.

Q. 38 and 39.—Payments were made daily.

Q. 40.—To the Gang Mate; this is, I consider, the best system.

Q. 41.—The full wage was earned practically universally.

Q. 42.—The system in force was practically that described in paragraph 208 of the Famine Commission Report of 1898 as the intermediate system of the North-Western Provinces.

Great care was, however, exercised in adjusting the proportion of diggers to carriers. If the latter were in excess they were formed into separate gangs and were employed on moorum and metal leading work, of which there was always plenty to be done.

Q. 43.—Maximum wage varied continually according to the grain rate fixed as wage-basis.

Children either worked, and earned a wage, or were fed in the kitchen.

Weakly and aged persons were formed into an "infirm gang" on task work.

It is impossible to exact piece work from such.

Q. 44.—Contractors were employed for supplies and hutting in some cases.

In a very few cases also to provide boulders for metal-breaking.

Q. 45.—Gang sheets were kept, one for each gang.

The change could have been effected promptly and without difficulty.

Q. 46.—By order of the Commissioner. On the cheapest gram. Small variations were neglected.

Q. 47.—The procedure to be followed is laid down in minute detail in the "General Order" issued regarding famine relief.

Q. 48.—Tasks were varied by the Executive Engineer, with the approval of the Deputy Commissioner. Grain rate used as wage-basis was fixed by Commissioner.

Q. 51.—Drafting from one work to another was very successfully carried out in Seoni District.

This is, in my opinion, a very important matter. If drafting were more largely resorted to there would be fewer eyesores in the way of useless "famine works" carried out solely to give employment in distressed localities. With suitable arrangements all relief workers could be drafted off to useful works, even if comparatively distant.

RAIPUR: }

The 11th January 1901. }

L. W. S. OLDHAM, CAPTAIN, R. E.,

late Executive Engineer,

Jubbulpore Division.



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*The following Memorial was addressed by the  
Malguzars of the Nagpur Division to the  
Hon'ble the President of the Famine Com-  
mission.*

We the undersigned Malguzars of the Nagpur Division have read with pleasure of the appointment of the Famine Commission for the purpose of enquiring into amongst other matters the pressure of the recent assessment under existing conditions. We thus avail ourselves of this opportunity for setting forth our views on this point for kind consideration by the Commissioners.

2. In view of the present deterioration of the condition of the agricultural classes of these Provinces consequent upon two severe famines and several years of scarcity, we beg to submit that the proportion of the rent which Government takes as revenue presses exceedingly hard upon the landlords, reduces their means of subsistence under what they had been accustomed to and prevents them from assisting their tenants or pushing forward anything like agricultural improvements. The uncertainty which exists as to the limit of rent which Government may take as revenue causes great anxiety and uncertainty to the landlords as a body and prevents their looking to the future with that assurance which is essential if they are to maintain the position which Government has conferred upon them. The circumstances of the Provinces are now such that cultivation in most districts has advanced to a point that it is in the best interests of all parties that there should be a limitation in the Government demand. The further extension of cultivation can only be made by an expenditure of money which will only give a disproportionate profit and in order to stimulate expenditure of money in such circumstances, complete assurance should be given to the landlords that they will enjoy its profits. The cycle of bad seasons through which the Province has passed has for the time being seriously crippled both the landlords and tenants, and if they are to recover they should be treated in a considerate and generous manner. Our prayer then is first for such a reduction in the land revenue where it is substantially over 50 per cent. of the assets as will enable the landlords to recover themselves and next the assurance that in the future the Government will enforce a 50 per cent. rule which prevails in the North-West Provinces in these Provinces. And secondly that though we do not state that the rents upon which the Government Revenue is based are high in all cases, yet we pray that abatements may be granted in all such cases where rents may be found unduly high. We also beg that the Government will consider how taccavi loans may be made to the landlords for the improvement of their estates with more facility than at present and that a generous policy of suspensions and remissions of revenue in times of local and general times of crop failure may be promoted.

3. We the landlords in consideration of the treatment as above will hold ourselves bound to help the Government in any well considered scheme for reducing the indebtedness of the tenants and for promoting agricultural credit generally.

END